Sports / A25

Pacquiao faces Thai fighter in Taguig today

Science / B4

How to help UP health science grads stay in country

Super / C4

Billy Crawford: Worst thing said about me is that I had no dreams

World / A12

Bush administration backs UN's beleaguered Annan

Tanong ng Bayan / A13

Buwis sa yosi at alak, dapat bang taasan?

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Bad news for RP nurses: No more shortcuts to US

LOS ANGELES—This comes as bad news for Filipino nurses.

Beginning Jan. 1, US immigration officials will block a shortcut that has allowed thousands of foreign nurses, predominantly from the Philippines, to get fast-track US work permits, the State Department announced.

According to a State Department bulletin is-

BAD NEWS/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Why lefties have survived world of the righthanded

PARIS—Why has left-handedness survived among humans?

That has long puzzled anthropologists, for lefties face worse disadvantages in life other than struggling with tin open

WHY/ A11

KAYA NG KALIWETE ANG GAWA SA KANAN

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Saturday, December 11, 2004 ★★ 116 pages / 16 sections / Vol. 19 / No. 3 P18
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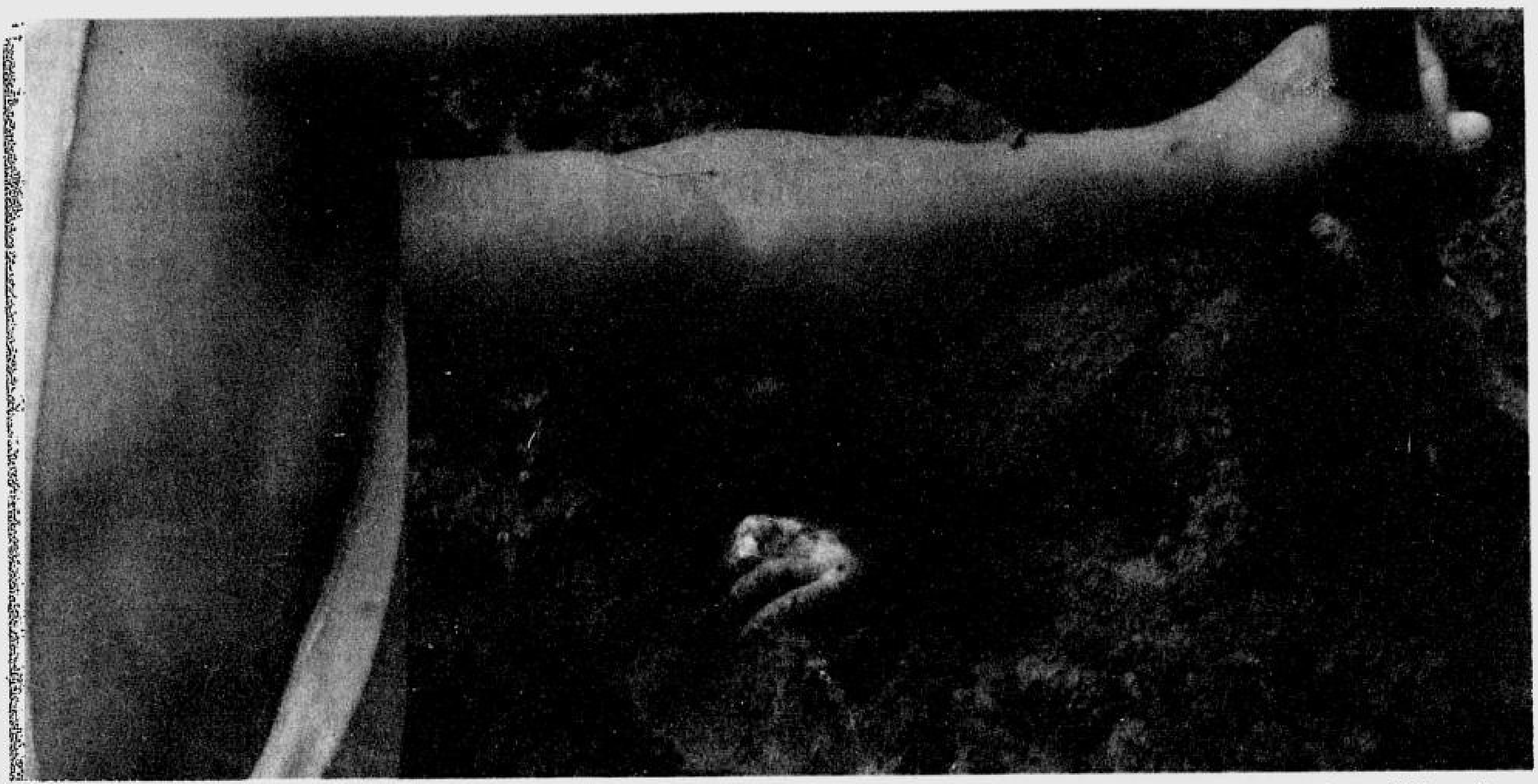
Water shortage looms



A HAND appears from beneath the ruins of the collapsed two-story Repador building in Barangay Tignoan in Real, Quezon, as miners and Army men continue on Friday to dig up and recover bodies and search for signs of life. Search-and-rescue operations will continue until al possible survivors are found, the military said. AFP

Logs, mud close water tunnel to Angat Dam

By Norman Bordadora and Tina G. Santos

AFTER the rampage of four successive cyclones now comes the threat of a water shortage.

So deadly was the avalanche of logs and mud triggered by the recent storms and a typhoon that a 13-km tunnel that brings in water to Angat Dam from Umiray River in General Nakar, Quezon, has been severely damaged, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System said yesterday.

This could mean that faucets and other water distribution outlets could run dry in Metro Manila and nearby provinces in the summer months starting in April or May until June, MWSS administrator Orlando Hondrade told the INQUIRER.

To help ease the threat, Hondrade appealed to Metro Manila residents to conserve water.

"The tunnel is totally closed ... It has been washed out because of the huge landslides," Hondrade said, adding that logs and boulders had rendered the tunnel useless.

The Umiray facility supplies 20 to 30 percent of Angat Dam's water reserves, Hondrade said. *(For more info on the tunnel, see Page A21.)*

Located in Norzagaray, Bulacan, the dam supplies the potable water needs of 97 percent of Metro Manila's estimated 10 to 12 million people.

Angat also serves the entire irrigation requirements of Bulacan province and parts of Pampanga, said Ramon Alikpala, executive director of the National Water Resources Board, which regulates the use and distribution of the country's water supply.

Alikpala said water officials would meet on Monday to evaluate the impact of the damage on the lime-and-concrete and how it could be remedied.

Hondrade said there would be

WATER/ A21

Miner's nightmare led to miracle rescue in Real

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

REAL, Quezon—For two consecutive nights, the 49-year-old miner had a hard time sleeping.

Luis Balungay of the Philex Mining Corp. said a young girl calling for help had been "haunting" him in his sleep ever since he arrived here at the stricken Barangay Tignoan on Monday.

Along with some 40 other miners from three mining concessionaires in Benguet province, Balungay was sent to Tignoan to try and locate possible survivors trapped under the rubble of the Repador building, which had collapsed at the height of Tropical Depression "Winnie" on Nov. 29.

He said his vivid dreams seemed real and kept coming back to him even in the day, when he and his colleagues were drilling into the debris.

"The child kept on crying," Balungay said in Ilocano. "She crawled toward me, then clutched my leg."

And then, he said, the child suddenly turned into an elderly woman.

"I was really afraid," he said. "I couldn't move. I almost died in my sleep. Luckily, a fellow miner who was beside me woke me up. It was only then that I realized that it was all a bad dream."

But it was more than a nightmare; it proved to be a portent of things to come.

On Thursday morning, Balungay was the first to hear the faint sobbing voice of a woman crying for help from under the rubble.

But when he told his colleagues, they refused to believe him. "Maybe they thought it was part of my nightmares. But I was sure it was not," he said.

Minutes later, Balungay and the other rescuers were pulling out 3-year-old Estela Marie Sur out of the

MINER'S/ A21

13.6M affected by 4 typhoons

By Volt Contreras and Fe Zamora

IT MAY boggle some minds but the four cyclones that lashed Luzon in a span of 18 days affected a total of 3.07 million families—or 13.62 million people.

That's more than the population of Metro Manila, roughly estimated at 12 million, and about equal to the combined populations of Bangkok and Singapore. It also far exceeds New York City's eight million inhabitants.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman gave the latest figure yesterday after reassessing the damage caused by the cyclones "Unding," "Violeta," "Winnie" and "Yoyong."

The Department of Social Welfare and Development uses the term "affected" to refer to those who sustained injuries, or lost their homes, livelihood, or other valuables; whose houses, business establishments, or farms were hit by floods; who were forced to miss work or classes; or who got stranded for days.

As a special treat for Christmas, storm victims will be receiving—aside from usual relief bags—"brand new clothes" courtesy of the Bureau of Customs,

13.6M AFFECTED/ A21

PRESIDENT ARROYO leads arrival honors at the Palace for Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. EDWIN BACASMAS

New PM shares secrets of Singapore's success

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

WHAT is the secret of Singapore's success and development?

Three points, according to visiting Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong: a "clean system" of government, good pay for civil servants and the certainty of punishment for corrupt officials and employees.

Lee, son of Singapore's elder statesman Lee Kuan Yew, is here on a two-day visit as part of his Asean tour after being sworn in as prime minister on Aug. 14. He also serves as Singapore's finance minister.

He was received by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who described Singapore as a "high-tech giant" and the "most developed" in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Lee, 52, shared Singapore's se-

NEW PM/ A8

Cuisia files ₱100-M suit vs wife's siblings

By Doris C. Dumlao

FORMER Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia Jr. has instructed his lawyer to file a P100-million damage suit as well as libel and perjury charges against three of his wife's siblings who had accused the couple of swindling his parents-in-law of P134 million.

In a press briefing yesterday, Cuisia accused the siblings of his wife Ma. Victoria—Gerardo Jose, Luis Jose and Cynthia Lopez—of conspiring to poison the minds of their ailing parents and convincing them that he and his wife had "stolen" their money.

"The objective of my sister-in-law and brothers-in-law is to get their hands on the funds which are managed by my wife and this is why they have insidiously and maliciously poisoned my parents-in-law's thinking to turn them against Vicky and me," he said.

Last Wednesday, Vicky's parents, Domingo and Emilia Jose, filed a complaint with the justice

CUISIA/ A11

ACCUSED in a P134-M estafa case by his parents-in-law, former Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia Jr. and wife Vicky hold a press conference on Friday. ERNIE U SARMIENTO

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, eastern section of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/12/11/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONTPAGE

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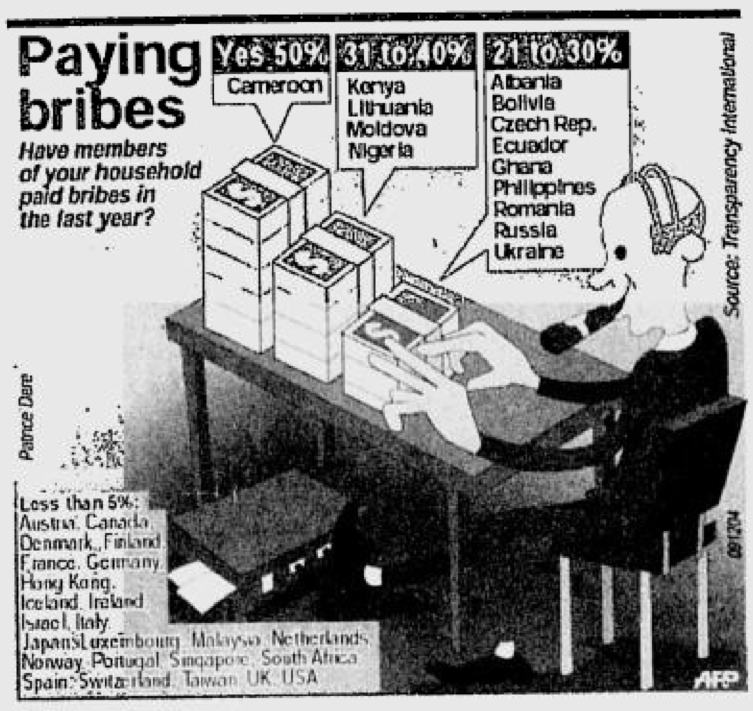
'Most corrupt' label rocks PNP

Aglipay challenges 115,000 cops: Prove Transparency Int'l wrong



Source: Transparency International

By Christian V. Esguerra

IS THE BODY tasked to investigate alleged widespread corruption and other irregularities at the Philippine National Police really up to the job?

In separate hearings early this week, PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay asked congressmen to come up with a law to make the Internal Affairs Service "completely independent" from the PNP.

Aglipay yesterday said the request was meant to enable the IAS to conduct a more effective investigation of irregularities within the police organization, including its "lifestyle check" of its top officials.

The IAS has apparently failed to sow fear especially among the PNP's top brass, considering that its findings were only "recommendatory" in nature. Meaning, it's still the PNP chief who decides whether to uphold or junk the IAS recommendation.

For months it has been in the hunt for officials who might have been pocketing hefty amounts from the PNP's budget. So far, it has yet to go beyond examining statements of assets and liabilities submitted by PNP generals and colonels.

An irony is that the IAS is staffed heavily by active PNP officers even if its head, the inspector general, is a civilian.

Even before the IAS could come up with its findings, Aglipay said he had already ordered the appointment of civilian deputies to the PNP's office for comptrollership and for finance.

"You will now see that there will be more civilians assigned to critical (positions)," he said in a press conference. "There will be a lot of changes."

The decision was prompted by the controversy hounding Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, a former military comptroller under investigation for his unexplained wealth estimated at P43 million.

A number of police officials had also floated allegations that there were other "General Garcias" at the PNP, particularly those who had served at the Office of the Comptroller.

An allegedly common scheme is known within the PNP as "throwback" or the practice of receiving "kickbacks" by top officials who had allocated money for ghost projects.

There was also "fund conversion" similar to the one allegedly being practiced at the Armed Forces. The scheme is practically "technical malversation" since budget allocated for a specific project is spent for another.

Masked gunman opens fire at rights rally; 1 dead, 4 hurt

LEGAZPI CITY—A masked gunman opened fire at an International Human Rights Day rally yesterday, killing a left-wing activist and wounding four people, including two children, police and organizers said.

The gunman fired randomly at about 600 people in Daet, Camarines Norte, said Nancy Cabug, the coordinator for the human rights group Karapatan.

Edmundo Salcedo of Barangay San Pedro, Panganiban town, was pronounced dead on arrival at the Camarines Norte Provincial Hospital.

Arsenio Paylan, as of press time, was in the intensive care unit. Eduardo Ordinario, Angelo de Luna, 10, and a still unidentified 5-year-old girl were also wounded and undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

Salcedo, Paylan and Ordinario were members of the Kilusang Mambubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) Camarines Norte chapter, while de Luna and the unidentified girl attended the rally accompanied by their parents.

Farmers protest

Some 3,200 protesters in Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz and Antique joined yesterday's protest actions led by the December 10 Movement, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and the Panay Alliance-Karapatan. They assembled from three points before converging and holding a rally at the grounds of the new Iloilo provincial capitol.

Journalists in Antique held a 24-vehicle caravan in the capital town of San Jose to condemn the rash of killings of journalists and to demand justice for the victims.

Not to be left behind, running priest Robert Reyes yesterday serenaded the Supreme Court with "protest" Christmas songs pressing for the release of suspects in several celebrated cases, including the convicts in the killing of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

Reyes, members of Gomburza, and relatives of the suspects in the controversial murders of Aquino, Manila police Supt. Manolo Martinez, Col. Rolando Abadilla, and the Chiong sisters in Cebu, all sang protest carols in front of the high court yesterday morning.

Reyes urged the tribunal to consider the petition of the 15 soldiers convicted for killing Aquino, noting that a new witness, SP04 Ruben M. Cantimbuhan, had surfaced to claim that it was Rolando Galman who shot the late senator in August 1983.

Tension rises

At noon yesterday, the Northern Police District monitored at least six buses and five jeepneys full of protesters and rally streamers at the North Luzon Expressway heading for Metro Manila to join the simultaneous mass actions.

Some 10 members of the Alliance of Progressive Labor were dispersed by policemen at the Chino Roces Bridge in Manila. APL's Joey Ignacio said he and other members suffered bruises in the scuffle.

"It's human rights day but our right to assemble peaceably was violated," Ignacio said.

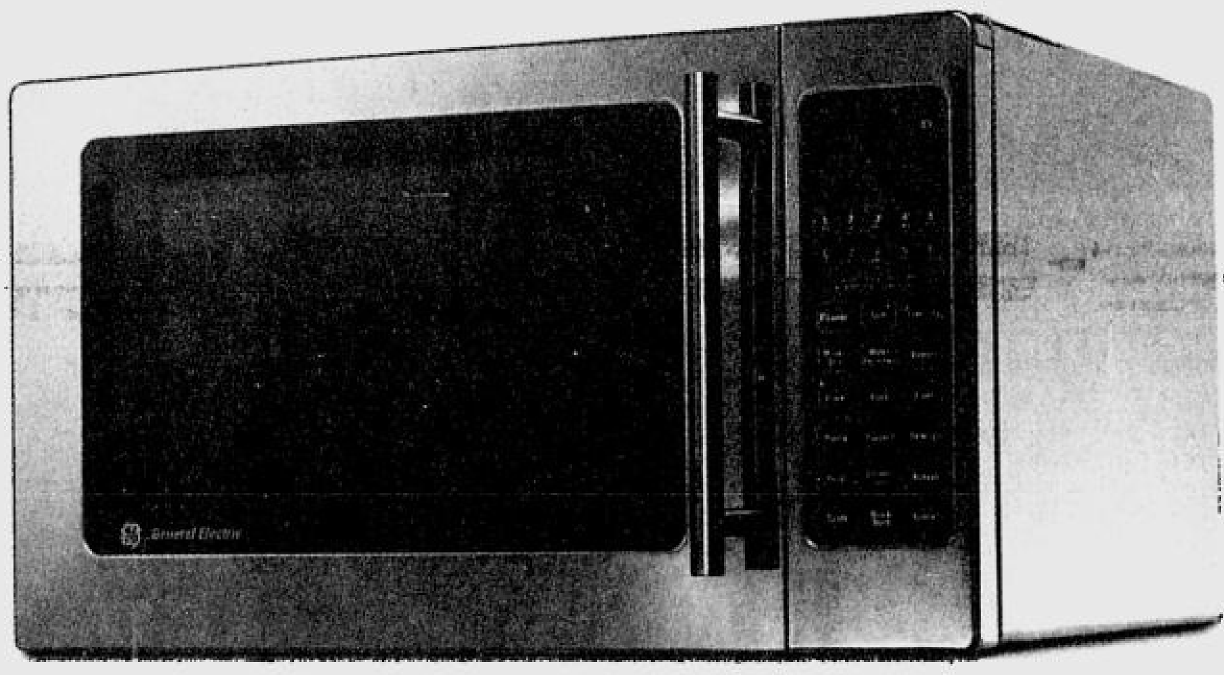
Later, however, the police allowed 1,500 members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, Gabriela, Anakpawis, Bayan and Bayan Muna to march on the Chino Roces Bridge.

Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes said the human rights situation in the Philippines might was in a state of calamity because of rampant violations.

Heart-breaker

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said President Macapagal-Arroyo "broke the hearts" of the families and relatives of 30 political prisoners when she failed to release them in time for this year's commemoration of the International Human Rights Day.

The prisoners included the 20 who were already recommended for release as early as 2001 by the justice department as well as those who were ailing and elderly. They were were among the 233 political prisoners existing under the Arroyo administration. *With Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau, Philip C. Tubeza, Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Leila B. Salaverria, Cynthia D. Balana, Vincent Cabreza and Maurice Malanes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and AP*



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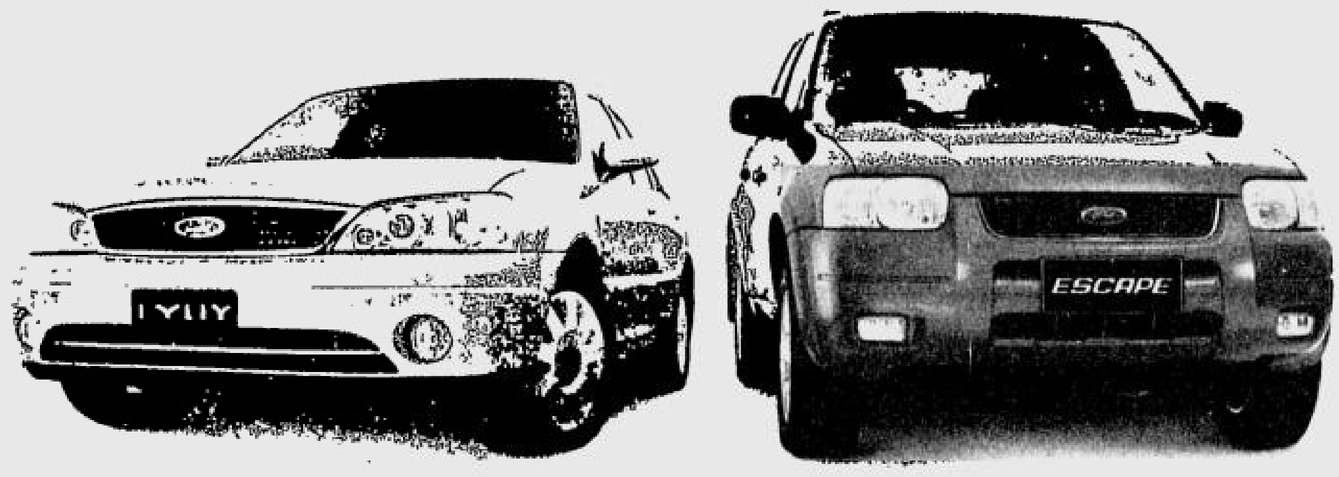

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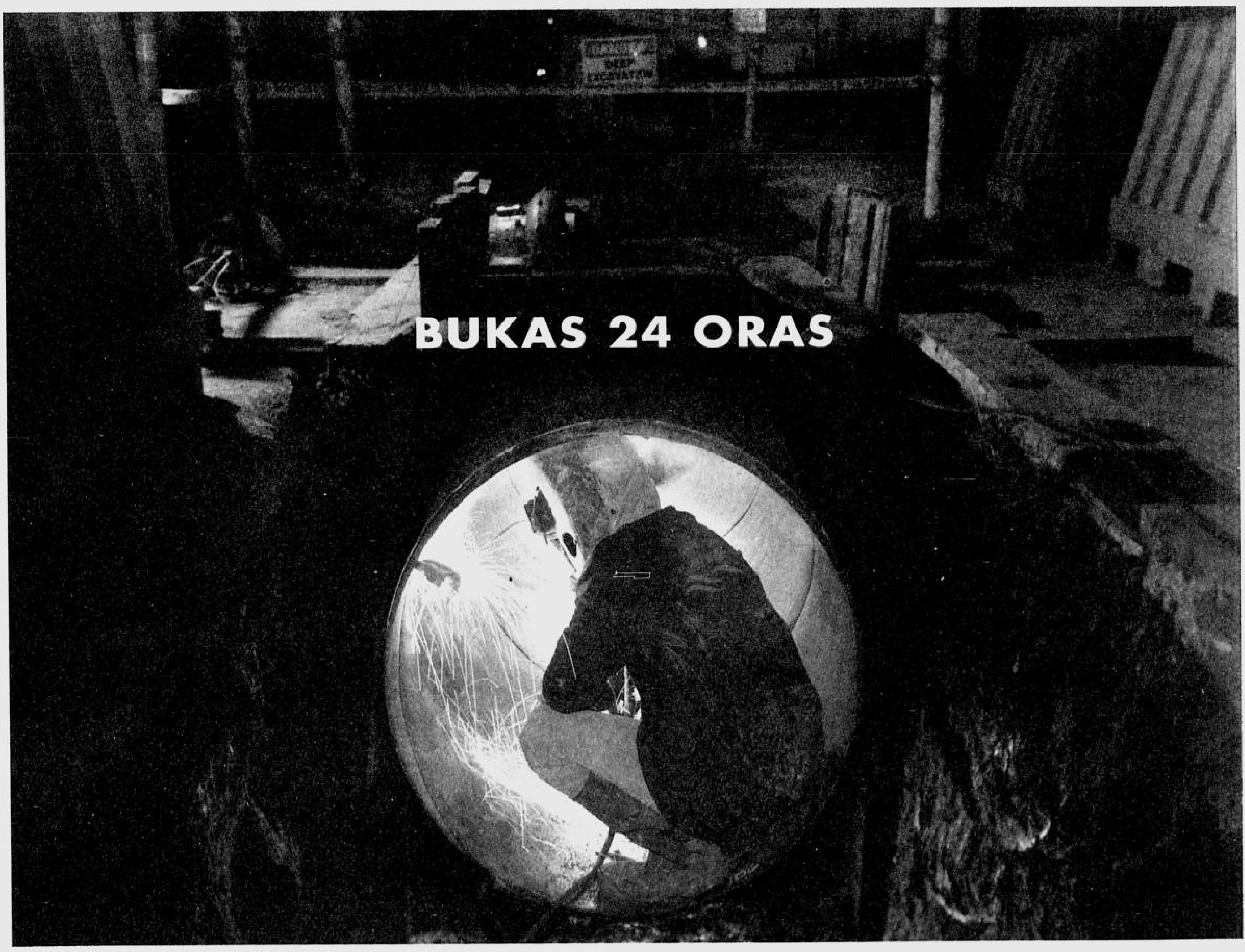

Mga barangay na dati'y ilang oras lang may tubig, ngayon 24 oras nang may tubig.

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Lahat ng ito'y nangyari dahil sa iba't-ibang water service projects at halos round-the-clock na pagtra-trabaho ng Manila Water, isang Ayala company at concessionaire ng MWSS.

At simula pa lang ito. Sa kanilang ika-7 taon, mas marami pang gagawin ang Manila Water. Ang na-invest na P9 bilyon ay dadagdagan pa para sa 2007, aabot na sa 5 milyong tao sa East Zone ang makakaranas ng tuluy-tuloy na pagdaloy ng tubig. At mas maayos na pagdaloy ng buhay. 24 oras.

Manila Water

Dala ng tubig ay ginhawa.

* Marikina, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati, malaking bahagi ng Quezon City, San Andres at Sta. Ana sa Manila. Kasama rin dito ang San Juan, Taguig, Pateros, at Cainta, Taytay, Antipolo, San Mateo at Montalban sa Rizal

Kin deny Chavit secretary went to Erap camp

By Armand Nocum

RELATIVES of Marilyn Perez, the slain secretary of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, yesterday denied reports she was set to testify in favor of ousted President Joseph Estrada before she was shot dead on Wednesday by a still unidentified gunman.

Interviewed by Sandiganbayan reporters, a relative of Perez, Singson's secretary of 16 years, said Perez did not tell them anything, nor did she show any sign that she was having trouble with the Singsons.

"There was nothing in her disposition to show that she was troubled by something," said a relative who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear for her life.

This developed as Estrada's lead counsel Rene Saguisag yesterday informed the antigraft court that Sen. Alfredo Lim would not be able to testify for the defense on Monday, thus they were withdrawing Estrada's request to appear in court during the hearing.

Estrada earlier asked the Sandiganbayan that he be allowed to hear Lim's testimony on Dec. 13.

According to Perez's relative, if the supposed "feelers" she had sent to the Estrada camp were true, then she would have confided in her relatives, or she would have been tense from having to make a "serious and hard decision like that."

Former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, Estrada's spokesman, had claimed that Reyes wanted to leave the Singsons and to testify in favor of Estrada.

But another relative of Perez dismissed the claim and asked Estrada and Dilangalen to stop spreading the alleged "rumors" of Reyes wanting to testify for the defense.

"We appeal to them to stop maligning the name of our beloved Marilyn with such unfounded rumors," said an elderly relative who also asked not to be named.

"These malicious insinuations of her wanting to testify against her boss are very unfair. Marilyn is no longer here to answer these charges. Let's leave her in peace," she said.

Perez, who was set to testify as a "rebuttal witness," is known to have provided prosecution lawyers with information to demolish the testimony of defense witnesses. She was shot dead while leaving Singson's building in Manila early this week.

Singson earlier said that was the reason she was executed.

But Dilangalen stood pat on their claim, saying that only Singson had the motive and the "homicidal impulse." He also said they were winning the case and would not be bothered by the supposed testimony of Perez in favor of Singson.

NBI ordered to probe killing of peasant leader

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to probe allegations that it was a soldier who shot and killed peasant leader Marcelino "Marcing" Beltran, who was set to testify in a congressional inquiry into the violent dispersal of a strike at Hacienda Luisita last month.

A son of Beltran said his father had made a deathbed declaration that it was a soldier who shot him in front of the family home in Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac, late Wednesday.

"I have already ordered the NBI to look into the killing. We have to be careful in identifying the perpetrator. It would be unfair to immediately blame the military since others have put on police or military uniforms when they commit a crime," Gonzalez said.

Mark Beltran, 18, said his father had described his attacker as wearing a military uniform. Mark was in the tricycle that took Beltran to the hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

NBI Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz said Beltran's reported dying declaration that a soldier had shot him would have to be studied as not all dying declarations should be taken at face value.

"We have to consider the source of the information. Dying declarations are stronger when they are made to a third party, like a doctor, bystander or barangay official who helped the dying man," Diaz said.

Gonzalez said the NBI would help in the investigation into the Beltran killing as it has already been designated the lead agency in the inquiry into the violent Nov. 16 dispersal of striking workers at Hacienda Luisita that left seven people dead and injured more than 100 others.

Gonzalez said the NBI was trying to verify several reports, including an allegation that three communist New People's Army commanders were killed during the dispersal.

He said the NBI was also still investigating whether the police violated the rules of engagement. *Philip C. Tubeza and Leila B. Salaverria*

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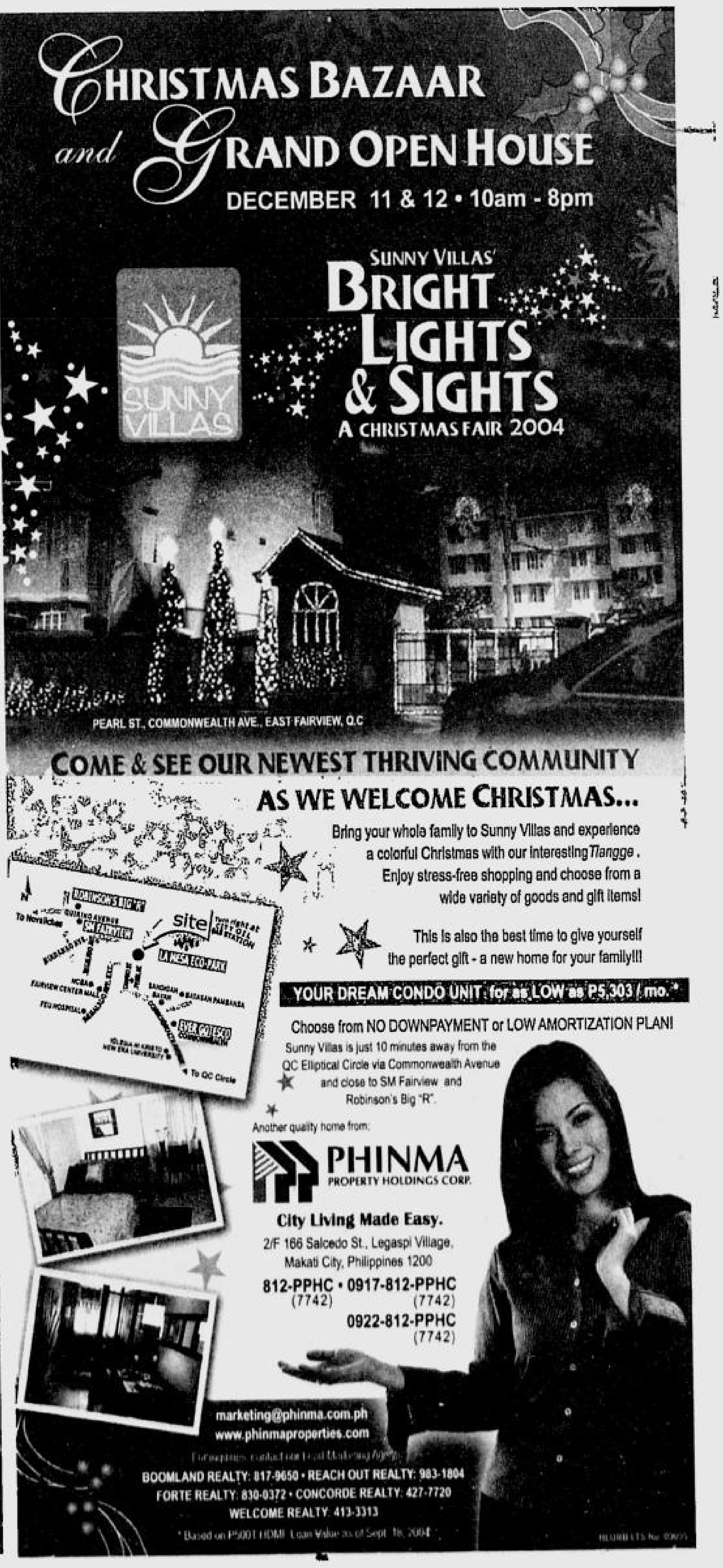
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Ex-Phivolcs chief: Don't blame illegal logging for killer slides

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF MALOLOS—What triggered the killer landslides and floods in Aurora and Quezon was the water that accumulated at the top of the mountains and that the peaks failed to contain, according to geologist Raymundo Punongbayan.

"Illegal logging was not the main culprit," Punongbayan told the INQUIRER on Thursday shortly after conducting an aerial inspection of Quezon. He said parts of the Sierra Madre mountain range in that province showed deep erosion, indicating the large volumes of water that swept it in the last two weeks.

He added: "There was a mix of trees—big ones, small ones, definitely not the size that loggers are after. [The loggers were] not responsible for the situation."

Punongbayan also said most of the trees had intact root systems, indicating their release from loose, saturated soil.

Because of the high elevation of the mountains and their steep slopes, the tendency was for the soil and everything on it to go down. "That's the law of nature," he said.

Punongbayan was the chief Philippine volcanologist when Mt. Pinatubo in Central Luzon erupted in June 1991.

His team from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology made accurate predictions of the Pinatubo eruptions—the worst worldwide during the 20th century.

Punongbayan said the recent landslides and floods were worse than the lahar (volcanic mud), rocks, ash and sand that were swept by the rains to the lowlands and that buried villages in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales from 1991 to 1997.

"[Landslides and flash floods] are traitors. They come when least expected," he said.

The lahar flows were bigger in magnitude, but the landslides and floods were no less lethal to the rural folk, he said.

Saying that forested areas did not guarantee safety, Punongbayan urged those living on the foothills to be alert for clues on impending landslides and floods.

"A sudden reduction of stream flow and when the rivers dry up" are signs of damming, or when large volumes of water are trapped on mountain peaks. When the peaks can no longer contain this amount of water, overtopping or bursting results, causing landslides and flash floods, he said.

Punongbayan said the government should install rain gauges on mountains and train people to read the amount of rainfall.

No rain gauge has been installed in Aurora and Quezon, he said.

Food truck hijacked

CITY OF MALOLOS—A truck loaded with relief goods intended for typhoon victims in Dingalan, Aurora, was hijacked last week in Nueva Ecija, discouraging some donors to carry out relief missions in that town, Bulacan Gov. Josefina de la Cruz said.

De la Cruz said some members of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry asked her where they could bring their relief goods.

"I told them to bring it to Dingalan because disaster victims in Bulacan have been getting enough. They would not want to because one of their trucks was hijacked while on its way to Dingalan," De la Cruz said in Thursday's meeting of the Regional Development Council.

To avoid a similar incident, Central Luzon police director Enrique Galang asked relief organizations to coordinate with the regional police in Camp Olivas, Pampanga.

During the same meeting, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap appealed to Central Luzon officials to provide counterpart funds for the rehabilitation of agricultural areas devastated by the successive typhoons.

"The DA could not do this alone so we need counterpart funds from the affected local governments and from your representatives in the rehabilitation efforts," Yap said.

Bulacan alone lost more than P382 million worth of vegetables, rice, livestock and fisheries. *Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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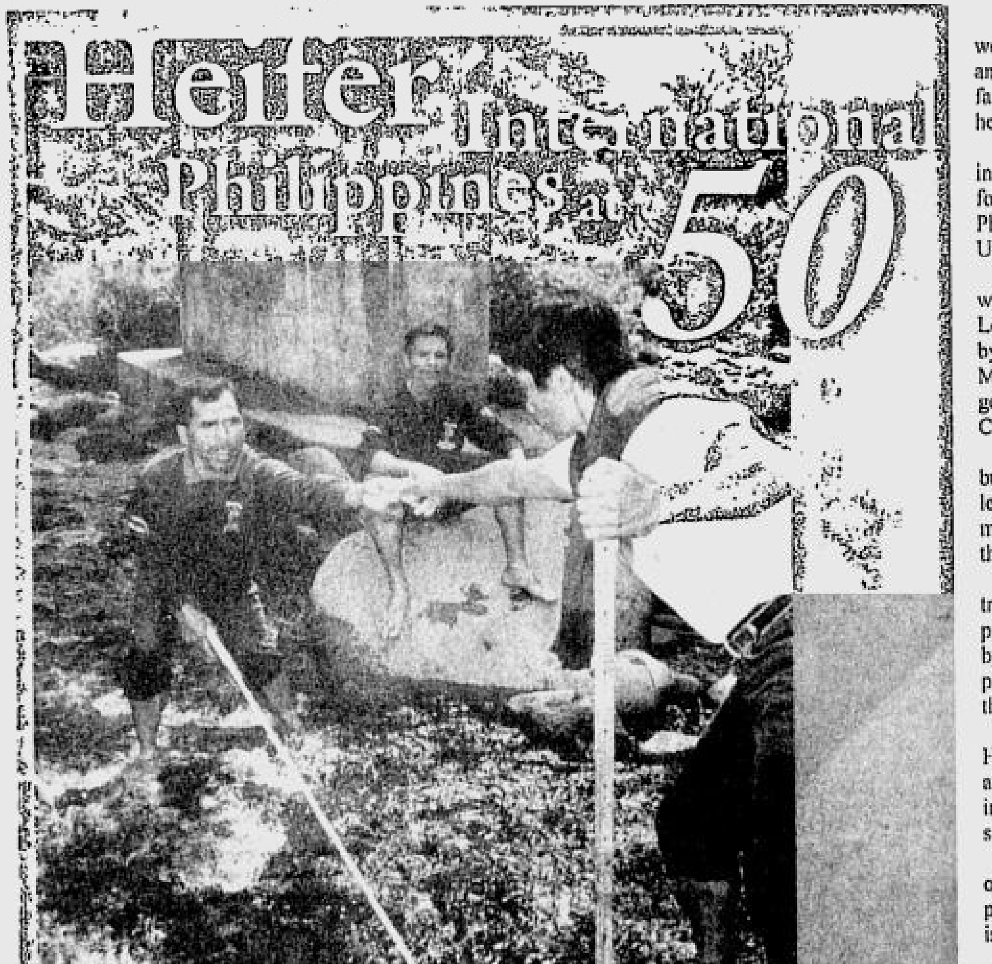

Heifer International Philippines is working with community organizations and local government units to help rural families create communities that are healthy, fulfilling and profitable.

Heifer began its work in the Philippines in 1954 when the boats carrying animals for South Korea exchanged some goats for Philippine monkeys to take back to the United States for sale to zoos.

The goats were given to local YMCA, which distributed them to the farmers in Leyte. The program was later administered by the United Church of Christ and United Methodist missionaries who worked together through the Philippine Global Life Center.

The program ceased in 1983 due to turbulent political condition as well as the leadership vacuum created with the retirement of the UCC missionary coordinating the program.

In February 1986, a Heifer employee travelled to the Philippines to explore the possibility of reopening the program and by September of the same year, the Philippine program was officially opened through the Philippine Rural Life Center.

In line with Heifer's standard practices, Heifer Philippines uses livestock, training and technical services to help rural families improve the living conditions and at the same time take care of their environment.

Passing the Gift, the practice of passing on the offspring/s of the livestock given by project recipients to other needy families, is an integral part of the Philippine program. This obligation of sharing and giving blends well with the norms and traditions of bayanihan or mutual help practiced across communities within the archipelago. The Filipino value of reciprocity ensures the sustainability of the project and the organization.

Heifer Philippines has identified five key priority issues in its effort to provide families with sustainable livelihood that is economically viable and ecologically sound.

Holistic Program - Field program designs will build on the historical strength of Heifer and will address the interwoven concerns of poor families. Programs and projects will bear a livestock intervention in appropriate way, as a spearhead, entry point or weaving component. Dubbed "livestock-based holistic approach to human development," the Heifer International Philippines shall evolve and undertake relevant programs in a learning process mode, with the application of participatory tools, techniques and approaches.

Resources Stewardship and Accountability - Heifer International Philippines will present itself a trustworthy and accountable organization with partners. The stewardship will enable responsible and judicious use of grants and donations at the right time and amount in compliance with legal policies of the Philippine government and partners, and consistent with Heifer International's standard system and procedures.

Capacity Development - Building competencies shall be a continuous process of learning among Heifer staff and partner groups. Capacity development of program staff and partners is directly related to the ability and capability of human resources working towards self-development.

Partnerships Development - Heifer International Philippines works with diverse communities and development agencies. In communities where strong people's organizations, nongovernmental organizations and government agencies exist, Heifer shall endeavour to work with these like-minded organizations and agencies in partnership mode where resources are jointly shared and mobilized among partners. Heifer shall adopt donor-partner relationships (not just donor-recipient) with project proponents, accompanying them in undertaking own programs and projects for a defined period of time.

Monitoring and Evaluation System - A good monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system makes hierarchy of objectives logical and aligned, and the effort to make the Heifer International Philippines strong in this area is subsumed in its five-year strategic plan. The system shall provide documentation, transparency, and establishes accountability of results, and impact of programs and projects.

As Heifer Philippines marks its golden anniversary, it looks forward to providing more Filipino families opportunities and hopes to produce their own food and increase their income through ways that are economically sound and environmentally friendly.

A brighter future for hardworking Nestor and his family

Because poverty has deprived him of a good education, 49-year-old Nestor Fuentes relied on hard work to get through life. He migrated from the Visayas to Lantapan, Bukidnon where he met his wife, Jessielyn Rosas.

When they were just starting, the Fuentes couple does not have much since Nestor works simply as a farm hand. Resourceful Nestor looked for ways to augment his measly farm income by learning various crafts and eventually worked as a plumber and carpenter in the community. Jessielyn, for her part, raised several livestock in their backyard to help sustain their growing family.

In 1994, Nestor became one of the research-partners of the User First work plan of the SANREM collaborative program in Bukidnon implemented by Heifer International - Philippines (HI-Philippines) and a local agricultural agency. Together with several other farmers of Lantapan, he learned about sustainable farming practices. These farmer-members, including Nestor, later formed ALSA-Kalikupan, which is now one of the active project partners of HI-Philippines in Lantapan.

His reputation as a hard worker and his knowledge of sustainable farm practices made Nestor a hands-down choice to become one of the project participants to HI-Philippines' goat dispersal project with ALSA-Kalikupan when it was launched in 1997. Nestor received from the project four does and a communal buck.

Nestor fully utilizes his goats' manure as fertilizers for his farm, thereby doing away with costly chemical fertilizer inputs. Aside from the significant savings he was able to generate by using organic fertilizer, Nestor also noted an increase in his corn and coffee bean harvest.

When HI-Philippines introduced the Community Animal Health Volunteer (CAHV) Program in Lantapan several months later, Nestor is one of the lead participants. He becomes one of the most active animal health volunteers not only in their community but also in most parts of Lantapan. Applying his CAHV skills to his own livestock allowed him to pass-on eight heads to two other ALSA farm-families in less than two years after receiving the livestock from HI Philippines.

Nestor now has a total of 19 goats -- 14 does and five bucks. He has sold four goats in the past but does not want to sell again until his herd reaches 20. He is likely to able sell his goats again as some of his does are now pregnant and would give birth in the next few months. Though he does not want to put it directly but Nestor is actually reserving the selling of his goats for the education of his seven children who are all studying - two in college, one in high school and four in elementary level.

But that is not enough for the hardworking Fuentes couple. Nestor works as part-time technician at a local electric company. Over at their backyard, Jessielyn has expanded her own livestock from previously just raising chickens and geese to include cows and, of course, goats. Relative income improvements from their farm produce and livestock, as well as Nestor's many other vocations, enabled the Fuentes family to purchase the three hectares of land that Nestor has been tilling for years.

Nestor may have already earned some of his keeps as a farmer but believes he still has a long way to go. Aside from providing for their needs and education, Nestor and Jessielyn never fail to impart to their children the essence of hard work. In fact, they have involved their kids on most of their farm activities. During summer or whenever there are no classes, Nestor makes his children do farm work such as feeding the goats and other livestock. Apart from molding his children with the right character to go with good education, Nestor also wants to pass to them the legacy of hard work; for it is through hard work that he and Jessielyn was able to provide for them.

Heifer Works Around The World

Heifer International works with communities to fight hunger and poverty and care for the earth. Since 1944, it has helped some 7 million families or more than 38 million people directly or indirectly in more than 115 countries around the world.

Direct assistance includes gifts of livestock, training and passing on the gift. Indirect assistance includes informal farmer-to-farmer training, livestock breeding services and benefits from the work of Heifer-trained community animal health workers.

Heifer envisions a world of communities living together in peace and equitably sharing the resources of a healthy planet. Fundamental to its approach to sustainable development is "Passing on the gift". Resource-limited families who received an animal "repay" the loan by passing on one or more offspring to other families. These families in turn pass on the gift to other families. Thus, creating a network of families sharing livestock, knowledge, resources and skills. Woven into every aspect of Heifer's work is a commitment to gender equity, caring for the environment and animal well-being.

Heifer sows hope for a world without hunger through SEED - Sustain, Educate, Enable and Develop.

To help build sustainable livelihoods and food systems, Heifer works will help significant number of men and women, boys and girls around the world to develop sustainable ways to support themselves using integrated livestock production.

To equip families to make informed choices and take actions to reduce poverty, hunger and environmental degradation, Heifer works to ensure that men and women, boys and girls increase their knowledge, critical awareness skills, and reflection on global issues relevant to their lives and communities.

Heifer will influence and support practice, policies and legal environments in which small-scale farmers operate so that they will help and support farmers instead of working against them. Heifer works to empower families to become agents of change in decisions that affect their livelihood. Heifer also extends its influence through education, advocacy and coalition building so that small-scale farmers' voices will be heard.

Heifer will continue to be evolve as an organization to be more effective, relevant, and efficient.

A Unique Approach to Ending Hunger and Poverty

Heifer's work throughout the world are guided by a set of principles called the Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development

Passing on the Gift
Accountability
Sharing and Caring
Sustainability and Self-reliance
Improved Animal Management
Nutrition and Income
Genuine Need and Justice

Gender and Family Focus
Improving the Environment
Full Participation
Training and Education
Spirituality

Teody's Love for Stephanie

By: Romulo G. Garcia

It was April 5, 2001, the members of United Small Farmers Association of Barangay Jaguilanan were on a festive mood as they receive 11 carabaos from Let's Help Bohol Program or LHB a program spearheaded by the Provincial Government of Bohol with assistance of Heifer International Philippines.

As his name is called, Teodoro Balili felt his emotion rushing in excitement as he walked towards the stage to receive his donor card.

Teodoro's mind was wandering at that moment. He recalls the teasing and sarcastic remarks by his neighbors, "You should stop making children Teody, how can you feed your children if you don't work? You are lazy Teody." He was awakened from his reverie when the Provincial Veterinarian asked him, "Teody, what will be the name of your carabao?". "Stephanie," Teody replied.

Family. Teodoro Balili, Teody as called by his friends, is 44 years old. His wife, Pablita is 36. They already have 8 children in their 16 years of marriage. They are tenants living in a 1.7 hectare land of Purok 3, Jaguilanan, Catigbian.

Their life is not easy. They live in a 4 X 2 meter nipa hut with bamboo walling, too small for a family of ten. Feeding 8 children three square meals a day is even harder. Teody and his wife had to borrow money and asked for food from relatives and neighbors for their family to eat.

Income. Farming was the family's main source of income. However, Teody's farm produce was very limited, he did not have a draft animal to help him in his work. He only cultivates 5,000 sq. m. of palay and 1,000 sq. m. of corn and a small vegetable area. He also tends few bananas, coconuts and other fruit trees.

Pablita helps the family by selling vegetables but the volume is very limited since attending to eight children takes most of her time.

Dream. Teody wishes to see his children complete College education, but sending two children to the Elementary School and another two kids to High School is already a very big challenge for him and his wife. They could not afford to buy them clothes, and school uniforms, supplies and snacks. Many times, their children had to go to school without eating a full meal.

Let's Help Bohol Program. The Program dramatically changed the work habit and lifestyle of Teody. With the seminar on values formation, Heifer Cornerstones, technical training, and with Stephanie as farming partner, Teody proved to his neighbors that he is not lazy, and he can provide for his family.

Stephanie, a big help in cultivating the farm, became an inspiration to Teody. And Teody goes to the field early in the morning and works until late in the afternoon, sometimes even extending until early evening.

Today. The Balili house has now doubled in size with the extension made of concrete hollow blocks. It has galvanized iron roofing and has electricity, courtesy of the Municipal Mayor.

When asked how he was able to renovate his house, Teody proudly answered, "With Stephanie, I am now tilling 12,000 square meters of palay, 3,500 square meters of corn, and had increased my vegetable area. I am no longer renting a carabao so I am able to save for the repair of our house. Pablita is also busy selling vegetables, sometimes returning home at 11 in the evening."

Furthermore, he claims, "Now I don't worry about the school allowance of my school children because they help in selling vegetables during weekends for which they are paid 20 pesos. That is enough for a week's allowance."

Teody is so proud of his life now, especially since he now occupies a position in the barangay. This designation bring about self-worth and respect among neighbors, friends and relatives within the community, a stature he did not have before Stephanie came to his life.

For Stephanie, she now has a two-month old carcalf which will be passed as a gift to another recipient. Hopefully, it will be a repeat of Teody's story.

Lessons. Teody reflects on his experience and learned, "We have to work harder and ensure that the money we earn does not go to waste. I am thankful to God for the blessings and good health. I am also thankful to the donors for the gift. I am very willing to share what I have because I know the joy of sharing."

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New PM shares secrets of Singapore's success

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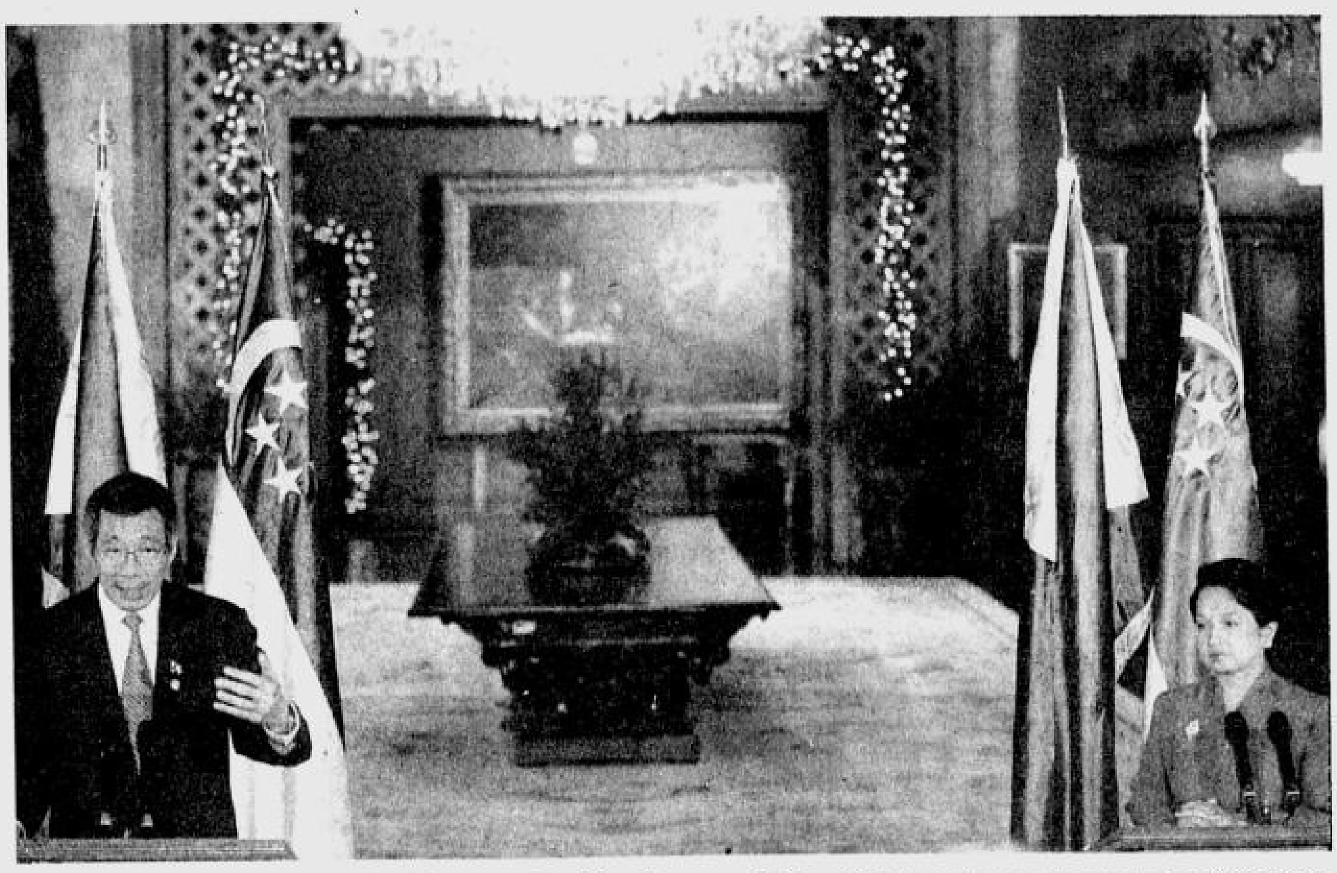

AT THE JOINT press conference in Malacañang, President Arroyo and Prime Minister Hsien Loong agree to boost bilateral and economic ties, regional efforts to fight terrorism and improve investments between their two countries. EDWIN BACASMAS

cret upon Ms Arroyo's prodding during their joint press conference yesterday in Malacañang. She had invited him to talk about his tiny city-state's "best practices" in fighting corruption, which he first discussed during the recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Chile.

Keeping system clean

"I think the most important thing we have in Singapore was we inherited a clean system, one which the British colonial government administered, and when the People's Action Party took over in 1959, we kept it clean," Lee said.

He said it was "a lot easier" to keep a clean system than to clean up a system that had "gone wrong."

"Secondly, we established a mechanism to make sure that if anybody was corrupt, [he] would be found out, investigated and punished," he said.

Starting at the top

According to Lee, the head of the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau reports directly to the prime minister and can investigate any official, including ministers.

He said it was important that corrupt people, especially officials, were punished: "There's no other way to do that. It has to start at the very top.

"If people see that ministers are making decisions and having some benefits along the way, then you can't do it secretly. Your subordinates, your secretaries must know and say, 'Well, if the boss is doing that, I better put aside something for myself, too.' And the whole system will go wrong.

"So you have to start clean, keep it clean. It's sometimes painful but that's the only way to do it."

Thirdly, Singapore finds "virtue" in ensuring that officials and members of the bureaucracy are well-paid.

"If we don't pay [someone] proper wages, even at the working level, he can't earn a living for himself and for his family," Lee said, adding:

"It's not possible to [tell someone], 'You must not take a little percentage so as to stamp a passport or approve an application or to slant a decision one way or the other. He has to live.

"So we made a virtue of paying our civil servants competitively. We require them to perform, but our philosophy is, Whatever [we pay] in wages is well worth the performance we get from them."

Also her dream

Ms Arroyo could only express envy for Singapore's not-so-novel formula.

"With regard to the high pay of public servants, that is also my dream. But it's difficult to do that right now given our budget deficit. That's why we need to do fiscal reform so that we can afford a better-paid bureaucracy," she said.

The President said the government's re-engineering plan—which includes attractive retirement pay for redundant employees—was being implemented to raise savings partly for the pay increase of a "leaner and meaner" bureaucracy.

She said her administration was bent on fighting corruption, which she acknowledged as a major hindrance to economic development and prosperity.

She also said Singapore's clean system "might be enough to make us feel very desperate" for a new form of government, but that she would not wait for a parliamentary system to be in place before taking action.

Hong Kong model

The President said she had been trying to put in place an anti-corruption mechanism similar to Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (Icac).

She said Hong Kong graduated from being a "corrupt system" 30 years ago to being perceived as corruption-free seven years after Icac began the good work.

"I'm trying to learn from the Hong Kong experience," she said, adding that a workshop organized by Icac founder Tony Kouk would be held next week for Cabinet and sub-Cabinet members.

She also said she had ordered a revival of a one-stop business processing shop to address concerns of Singaporean and even Filipino businessmen about bureaucratic red tape "and the corruption that goes with it."

Not only corruption

But Lee suggested that Singaporean investors were concerned not only about corruption but also about contracts being scuttled or nullified by Philippine courts.

He said Philippine officials and businessmen should first "make a pitch" to show that the environment is "improving," that there were "attractive opportunities" for investors to consider, and that investors would be assured that "as the project develops, they will be looked after."

Lee, however, said Ms Arroyo had explained what she was doing in that regard. "I think that would be very helpful," he said.

He also said Singaporean companies here—like Singtel, Globe Telecoms and Keppel—were doing well.

Wide range of concerns

Lee said he and Ms Arroyo had discussed a wide range of concerns, such as expanding trade, investment and tourism exchanges, increasing cooperation on antiterror plans such as exchange of information and interdiction of terrorist funds, and enhancing cultural ties.

He said he had also proposed the renegotiation and expansion of the air agreement between Singapore and the Philippines.

He noted that there were only 17 flights a week between the two countries, compared to 200 with Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur and 400 with Bangkok and Jakarta.

"It's really out of proportion to the potential that we could develop if [we] have more flights," Lee said.

Ms Arroyo said she would consider the proposal, her policy direction being toward liberalizing the aviation industry.

She said the Philippines was inviting more Singaporean tourists and that the government would grant "frequencies to Singaporean budget airlines" that would use the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, Pampanga.

'Fresh start'

Lee, who was accompanied here by his wife Ho Ching, executive director and CEO of Temasek Holdings, graduated with first class honors in mathematics.

He holds a diploma in computer science from the University of Cambridge, and also attended the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Ms Arroyo said Lee represented "a new consensus in Asia, a fresh start in the world." She said she was impressed by the "breadth and depth" of his world view.

Hospitality praised

Lee praised Filipino hospitality for his second visit, his first as premier.

"I deeply appreciate President Arroyo's kind invitation and very generous hospitality, particularly at a time of a lot of stress and preoccupation for her because of the recent typhoons that hit Luzon," he said.

He expressed his condolences to the typhoon victims "and also to the Philippines generally."

"The President briefed me on the situation and I'm quite sure the Philippine people will take it with customary courage and determination and cope with this latest adversity," he said.

Seed money

A member of the Singaporean Embassy said the Singapore government had donated $50,000 for the disaster victims. The amount was used as "seed money" for contributions from Singaporean firms and organizations and would be coursed through the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Bad news …

From page A1

sued Wednesday, until further notice, the government will not process applications filed after January 2002. With this change, what has been a 60-day wait for a US work permit could now drag on for three years or more.

"It's basically going to cut them off," said Charles Oppenheim, head of the State Department's immigrant visa control division.

Recruiters have long sought nurses from the Philippines, where schools train nurses for work in the United States. The change could leave a gaping hole for hospitals across the country that increasingly rely on foreign-born nurses to bridge a nursing shortage.

Aging US population

Authorities have warned that the US could face a shortage of roughly 275,000 nurses by 2010, though exact estimates are difficult to come by. Technology will likely reduce the number of nurses needed in the future, but the aging US population will require more.

Nurses in the United States said they hope the new limits would help refocus attention on training and recruitment of nurses within the country.

"If the industry has ready access to nurses from whatever, they would never address why we don't have a sufficient domestic nursing work force," said Cheryl Peterson, senior policy analyst for the American Nurses Association.

But in the short term, the change would hurt hospitals, health economist Len Nichols said.

RP major source of nurses

"The Philippines is our major source of imported nurses. We've been doing that at a clip of thousands a year for a while now," said Nichols, vice president of the Center for Studying Health System Change, a nonpartisan Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

Nurses are not the only workers affected by the change. Doctors and tech workers also fall in the same category, but the work permit options for nurses are more limited under immigration rules.

Robert Salasar, 31, a nurse from the Philippines, began working at a Los Angeles area hospital in July and is awaiting his green card.

"It's better pay and less patients," Salasar said of his job.

But he now worries that friends and family in the Philippines will have to wait years for the same opportunity.

Canadian and Mexican nurses can also obtain visas to work in the United States under the North American Free Trade Agreement. But not enough Canadians opt to come south, while Mexico does not produce sufficient numbers of US-qualified nurses, Nichols said.

The new quota limit is actually the indirect result of a more efficient immigration process. After Sept. 11, 2001, the system experienced a backlog due to updated security measures. Many foreign workers from the Philippines, and to a lesser extent, India and mainland China, got by on temporary work permits as they waited for their "number" to come up for a green card.

Now those cases are being processed. The government said that beginning Jan. 1, it would no longer issue new temporary work permits for workers from these countries until it had dealt with the backlog, which could take several years.

Immigration attorney Carl Shusterman, whose firm represents hospitals throughout California and helps about 350 Filipino nurses a year find jobs in the United States, said he frequently obtained work permits for qualified nurses in 60 days, allowing them to work as they wait the roughly three years for their permanent residency.

AP

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Lino A. Cruzat
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A. Mabini St., Caloocan City
Editha S. Yadao
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P5,000 3rd Prizes
Grace R. Velasco
Maypajo, Caloocan City
Mylene P. Pablo
Novaliches, Quezon City
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Flora V. Tan
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PER DOH-BFAD PERMIT NO. 1448 s. 2004

Ho, ho, ho: House committee plays Santa to Pagcor

By Carlito Pablo

STANLEY Ho of Macau and other foreign casino magnates are close to gaining a foothold in the local gambling scene.

The House committee on legislative franchises has recommended for floor approval a measure which, among others, will allow the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. to enter into joint ventures with "foreign corporate or legal entities."

The proposed measure amending the Pagcor charter is embodied in House Bill No. 3409 sponsored by Representatives Federico Sandoval (Lakas, Malabon-Navotas) and Mauricio Domogan (Lakas, Baguio City).

The bill hopes to enable Pagcor to "dock floating casinos in any part of the Philippines."

Ho, who attempted to make his presence felt in the country during the abbreviated term of deposed President Joseph Estrada, is particularly known for his floating casinos and restaurants.

The measure will allow Pagcor to put up gaming establishments "whether on land or sea" but must "consult" with concerned local government units.

According to the bill, gaming can be done "at anytime of the day or night."

Pagcor can "establish and operate clubs and casinos for amusement and recreation, including sports gaming pools (basketball, football, lotteries, bingo parlors, etc.) and other forms of amusement and recreation including games of chance."

It can also "enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind and for any lawful purpose ... including but not limited to joint venture agreements or similar agreements with local or foreign corporate or legal entities."

The proposed measure extends Pagcor's franchise, which expires on July 11, 2008, for another 25 years. It also provides a second renewal of another 25 years, or a guaranteed corporate life of 50 years from 2008.

The bill, however, does not allow the agency to operate jai alai—the Basque ball game once popular in Metro Manila.

Also, Pagcor gaming areas will "not be openly accessible to the general public."

Persons allowed to play are tourists, foreigners and Filipinos with a gross monthly income of P50,000, and two guests of the said qualified players provided that such guests are at least 21 years old.

With the endorsement of the bill by the House committee on legislative franchises, the measure will be subjected to floor debates and approval depending on the chamber's schedule.

It will need a counterpart measure from the Senate, after which the reconciled bill will have to be approved by the two chambers of Congress, and then signed by the President for it to be enacted into law.

STANLEY HO PDI PHOTO

Garcia defends GSIS reforms, cites P40-B unpaid premiums, P25-B bad loans

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System general manager Winston Garcia yesterday justified the drastic reforms he implemented at the state pension fund, saying these were meant to prolong the lifespan of GSIS coffers which have been cut by more than half from 65 years in 1997 to 32 years in 2002.

Addressing members of the Philippine Government Employees Association in Malacañang on Thursday, Garcia bared the precarious financial situation of the GSIS and appealed for more understanding and appreciation for his reforms.

"I also want to be loved just like any one of you, it's human nature," said Garcia, who has been vilified by state employees who have been grumbling over the undue delays in the release of their pension and their loans.

Garcia, who took over the GSIS post when President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power in 2001, said the state pension fund's dwindling resources forced him to implement reforms, particularly the establishment of a computerized online system that unified GSIS paper records in one database.

Garcia made a presentation on the dramatic decline in the fund's actuarial life—losses of roughly six years annually—which have been due to poor collections (67.5 percent) that has translated to P40 billion in unpaid premiums and over P25 billion of loans in default.

These losses were traced to the absence of a reliable membership profile and the lack of an appropriate agencies accounts management system to keep track of remittances and payments. GSIS had relied solely on government certification for members' service records.

Garcia said these loopholes in the GSIS were exploited by "unscrupulous persons in and out of the GSIS" who took out pensions and loans granted to dead or fictitious members and non-availing members.

Through the computerization program, Garcia said the GSIS was able to purge its membership from 2.7 million to 1.3 million; update and reconcile its service profiles; and speed up the withdrawal of loans and processing of claims.

Aside from the computerization program, Garcia said he also instituted a premium-based policy that ensured that the benefits equal the premiums paid by members.

RP sailor missing, 11 others saved as ship runs aground

By TJ Burgonio

A FILIPINO crewman went missing after a helicopter that plucked him and several others from their sinking Malaysian cargo vessel crashed into the icy Alaskan seas during rescue operations last Wednesday, officials said yesterday.

Eleven other rescued Filipino crew members of the ill-fated MV Selendang Ayu were brought to safety, the officials said.

The Filipino, whom officials declined to identify, was among seven crewmen who were rescued by a US Coast Guard helicopter before their vessel broke into two and sank in the Alaskan seas off Aleutian islands.

Due to "adverse weather conditions," the helicopter dived into the icy waters. Six of the rescued crewmen, including the Filipino, went missing after the crash, the officials said.

Strong winds and stormy weather forced the rescuers to halt their operations last Wednesday night, and resume these the next day.

Foreign affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco, United States, which has jurisdiction over Alaska, continued to coordinate with the US Coast Guard for any information on the missing Filipino.

Secretary Alberto Romulo has instructed Undersecretary Jose Brillantes and the consul general in San Francisco to extend "all possible assistance" to the Filipino crewmen of the ill-fated vessel.

The 12 Filipinos were part of the 26-man crew of the vessel.

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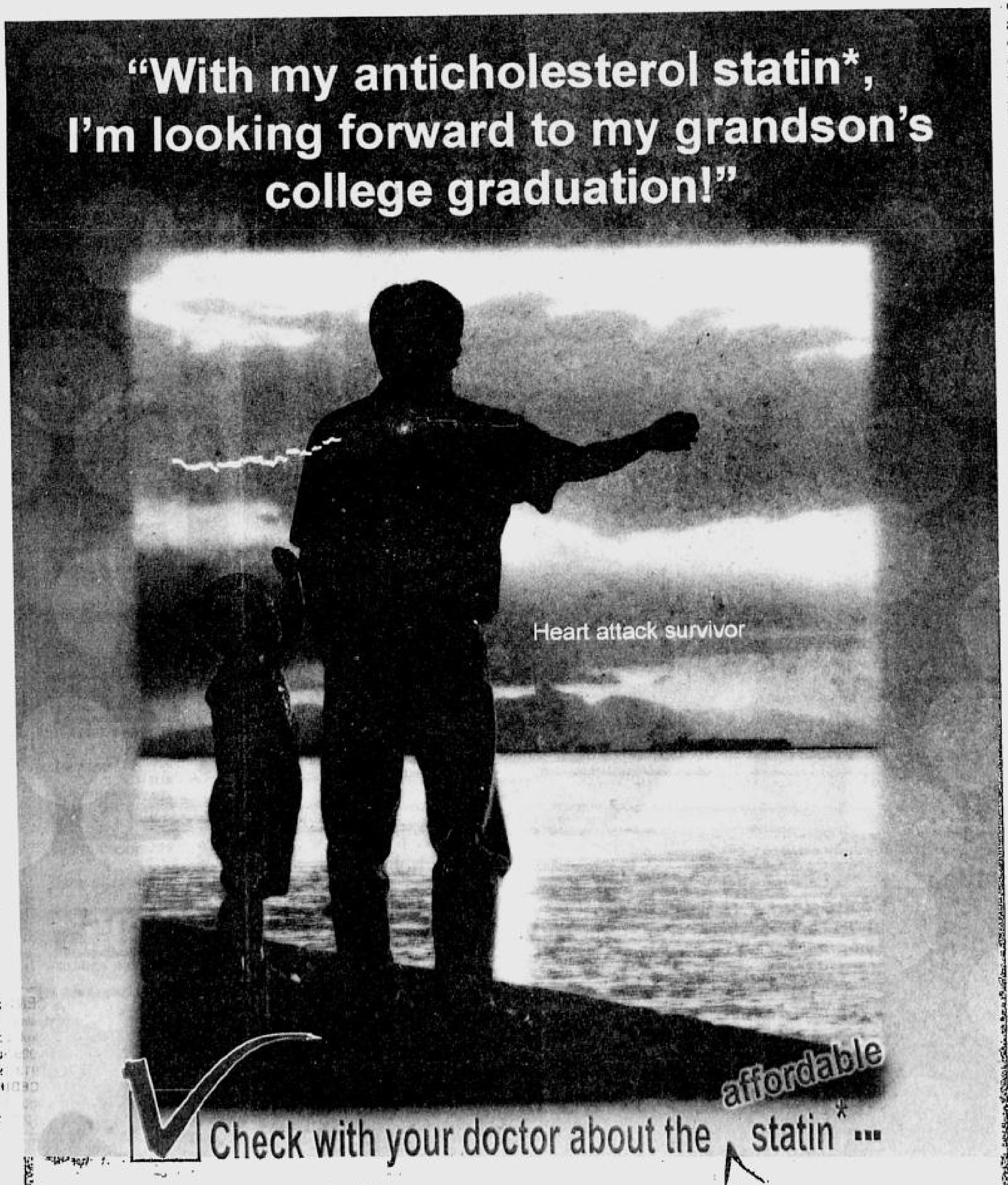

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Cuisia files P100-M suit vs wife's ...

From page A1

department against the Cuisias, charging them with 14 counts of estafa for allegedly swindling them out of P134 million.

Gerardo and Luis Jose and Cynthia Lopez supported their parent's charges in a separate complaint-affidavit.

"My name is more important than money," said Cuisia who is president of the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. (Philamlife), the largest and most diversified insurance firm in the country with an investment portfolio reaching P81.47 billion as of end-2003.

Cuisia said Vicky's three siblings had engaged in a vicious and malicious campaign to smear his reputation to pressure her into surrendering control of their parents' funds to them.

Using parents

Vicky and a third brother, Rene Jose, spoke to the media for the first time yesterday. They said their three siblings were lusting after the funds and were using their parents' illness to get what they wanted.

According to the Cuisias, the patriarch Domingo Jose suffers from "hepatic encelopathy, cirrhosis and chronic renal disorder" which can cause the production of toxins that affect comprehension and mental reasoning while the mother Emilia is a diabetic with occasional mental lapses.

"When they were still in full control of their mental faculties, both my father-in-law and mother-in-law instructed my wife not to let her siblings know how much money was in my wife's custody because of their fear that Vicky's three siblings would try to obtain control of the funds and totally dissipate them," Cuisia said.

Wife's apology

Vicky apologized to her husband "for being dragged into this family controversy, being the innocent victim of a malicious attack on his character which he had religiously protected for himself and his family."

She said her husband was never involved in any of the companies of the Joses, much less in the management of any funds belonging to the family.

Vicky and Rene said the funds referred to in the complaint were intact and safely invested with private banks.

The family's core business is real estate and property management. Vicky has been the treasurer and custodian of the Jose family companies for more than 20 years, apart from being a substantial stockholder of the firms.

'Pure baloney'

Rene said the amount of P134 million being claimed in the complaint filed by their parents was "pure baloney."

He said the original amount reportedly entrusted to the Cusias was P74 million, out of which the debt payments were reduced so the amount went down to P41 to P42 million. He said the funds grew to between P62 and P65 million under his sister's stewardship.

"I have examined the accounts and records and I can categorically say that this suit against Mr. Jose Cuisia and my sister Vicky has absolutely no basis," Rene said.

A businessman based in Pennsylvania in the United States, Rene said he has been flying back and forth for the past three weeks trying to settle the conflict among his siblings. He is a trustee and co-signatory with the parents of the disputed accounts.

Internal problem

"My siblings are exerting undue influence over my parents, thus creating this embarrassing situation for the family. As such, I would like to say this is an internal family problem and should not involve Mr. Jose L. Cuisia who has absolutely nothing to do with these accounts," he said.

He said his siblings were "in dire need" of money but he could not tolerate resorting to foul means. He said the three siblings who filed suit against the Cuisias have been living off the family's funds for the past few years, receiving ample salaries and their share of dividends.

Bankruptcy

In the 1970s, Vicky recalled that the Jose family corporations invested heavily in a construction project in Malaysia run by her brothers Gerardo and Luis. She said this project had failed because of "lack of expertise and poor management."

"My brother Luis left the family corporation to be on his own. My sister Cynthia was not involved in the family corporation," she said.

Vicky said she and her parents and some loyal employees had worked hard to rehabilitate the company. In 2003, she said the company was able to pay off its debts and free up their mortgaged properties.

"As the treasurer, I built up earnings from corporate funds which are incidentally intact. My parents have been regularly updated of the financial status of the companies," she said.

"Thirty years of hard work and sacrifices later, and now that the Jose corporations are in a better shape, my siblings Gerardo, Luis and Cynthia want to take control of the funds that were under my stewardship for years," Vicky said.

"They ought to be reminded that the corporate dividends took care of the daily upkeep and sustenance of my parents, their regular travel expenses here and abroad and the enormous medical bills. All my siblings also shared in the dividends," she said.

Each sibling receives about P500,000 a year in dividends from the company.

Vicky and Rene said their three estranged siblings had taken over the management of some of the companies and had been zealously guarding their parents.

No access to parents

Vicky said she had not been given access to her parents since August this year.

"I now only request that they bring my dad and mom to their physician for their continued health care because we know that both my parents have not seen their attending physician for over a month now, despite our pleas," she said.

"I have always promised my parents I will take care of them and have done so for more than 20 years and will do so while both are alive. I have no rancor or anger whatsoever in my heart for my parents, for I know that they are both not well. My parents are very loving persons, most especially my Mamang, and I will continue to love and serve them to the best of my ability," she said.

ERNIE SARMIENTO

CUISIA with wife Vicky and brother-in-law Rene Jose in yesterday's conference.

Why lefties . . .

From page A1

ers, guitars, scissors and golf clubs designed for the righthanded majority.

Statistical evidence links several auto-immune diseases, such as inflammatory bowel syndrome and ulcerative colitis, with lefthandedness.

Under Darwin's principles of evolution, genes that hamper survival of the species should get weeded out.

So it is a small mystery as to why the lefthanded have not gone the way of the dinosaurs.

Evolutionary boon

French anthropologists believe they have the answer: lefthandedness, far from being a disadvantage, is an evolutionary boon.

Their theory is that lefthanders survived—and in some cultures thrived—because they were better at fighting, having a built-in advantage in combat with a righthanded opponent.

Charlotte Faurie and Michel Raymond, of the Institute of Evolutionary Sciences at the University of Montpellier in southern France, compared the number of lefthanded people with the number of homicides in eight traditional societies where the weapon was a knife or a machete.

They analyzed data from eight societies: the machete-wielding Kreyol people of Dominica; the Ntumu people of Cameroon; the Dioula-speaking people of Burkina Faso; the Baka people in Gabon; the Eipo people of Irian Jaya; and Inuit people in Alaska, Greenland and Canada; the Jimi of Papua New Guinea; and the Yanomamo of Venezuela.

Most killings

The societies which had the most killings had the most left-handed people, they found.

At the most peaceful end of the scale, the Dioula had a homicide rate of only one hundredth of a death per 1,000 people per year, while left-handedness occurred only among 3 percent of the population.

At the other end of the scale, the Yanomamo had four homicides per 1,000 inhabitants per year, while left-handers accounted for a huge 22.6 percent of their population.

Faurie and Raymond do not say that to be lefthanded is a source of violence and they stress that violence can also have a range of complex causes.

What the data does imply is that the genes for lefthandedness have survived because, quite literally, in distant past, they helped their owners survive in the human jungle.

Fighting hypothesis

"This result strongly supports the fighting hypothesis," the pair say. "More generally, it points to the importance of violence in understanding the evolution of handedness." In traditional societies, individual combat has important consequences. The winner becomes the alpha male, gaining in social status and becoming an attractive mating prospect.

The idea behind their theory—published on Wednesday in Proceedings B of the Royal Society, Britain's de-facto Academy of Science—comes from sport, where the southpaw technique often gets the better of confused righthanders.

"Lefthanders have an advantage in sports involving dual confrontations, such as fencing, tennis and baseball (pitchers against batters) but not in non-interactive sports such as gymnastics," the study says.

The research was tested only on traditional societies' where there was a likelier risk of one-on-one combat, rather than in Westernized societies.

In industrialized cultures, the theoretical advantage enjoyed by lefthanders would be canceled out by long-range weapons such as the gun. AFP

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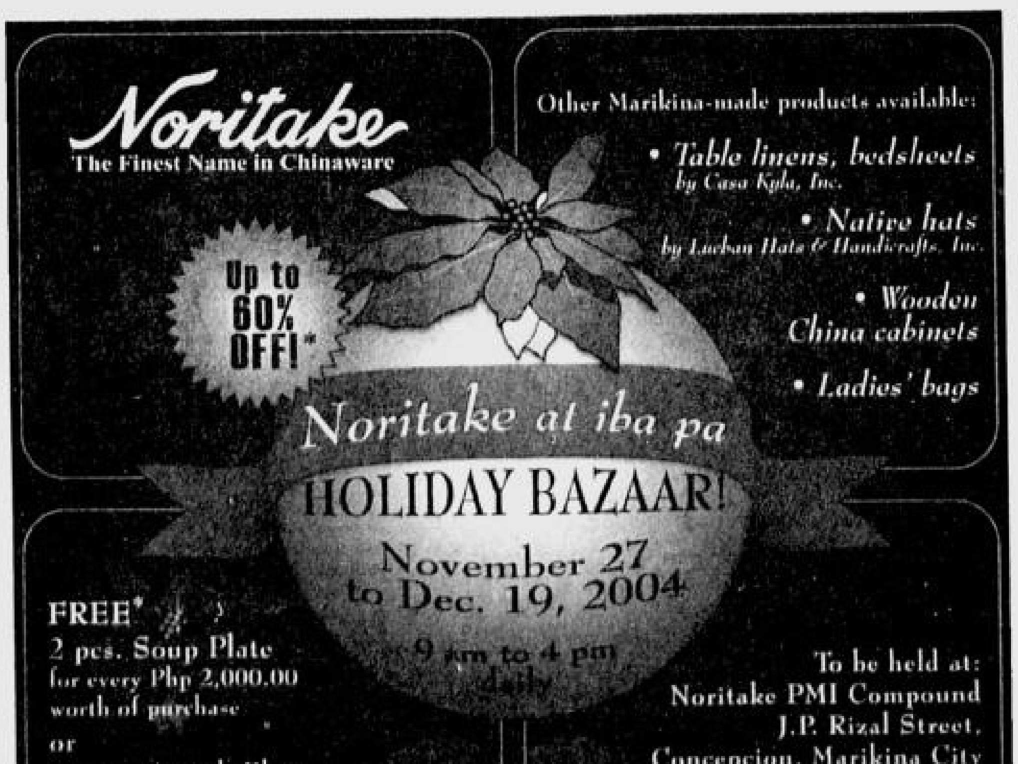
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Bush administration backs UN's Annan

UNITED NATIONS—The Bush administration expressed confidence in UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on Thursday and said he should stay in office, in a belated rebuff to demands from Republicans in Congress for his resignation.

US Ambassador John Danforth called reporters together to deliver the comments, saying that he had to clarify the US position after his colleagues and the media believed the United States government was not supporting Annan.

"We are expressing confidence in the secretary general and his continuing in office," Danforth said, adding that he was speaking for the White House and state department.

"No one to my knowledge has cast doubt on the personal integrity of the secretary general. No one," he said.

US Sen. Norm Coleman, a Minnesota Republican, who was later joined by five congressmen, last week called for the resignation of Annan, who has two more years in office before completing his second five-year term.

They accused him of presiding over corruption in the UN oil-for-food program for Iraq, administered by the United Nations but supervised by the 15-nation Security Council.

After Coleman's statement, President George W. Bush pointedly refused to defend Annan, saying he wanted a "full and open accounting" of the now-defunct oil-for-food program.

In reaction, the 191-member UN General Assembly gave Annan a standing ovation on Wednesday and the leaders of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Australia telephoned the secretary-general to voice support.

In an open letter on Thursday, a group of South African Nobel Laureates—former president Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and writer Nadine Gordimer—condemned attempts to have Annan resign. They said the real reason for the attack was "the admonishment by the secretary-general in respect of certain actions of the United States government in Iraq."

Danforth again called for a thorough investigation.

"The worst thing, to continue the cloud over an organization, is to give the impression that something is being hidden or that there is no total cooperation," he said. "And that really is deadly in any kind of an organization and that would have to be resolved."

But he said, "Our view of the performance of the secretary-general is that he has done a good job, that he is doing a good job, that we have worked with him, that we anticipate working with him in the future.

He noted Annan's help on the crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan and on planned elections in Iraq.

Danforth also played down reports that Annan's son, Kojo, had not fully disclosed his ties to a firm hired by the United Nations to inspect goods in Iraq. The younger Annan worked for the Swiss company Cotecna in West Africa.

"The son is an adult and I think generally speaking there is a perceived difference and a real difference between adult children and parents," he said. *Reuters*

FOR INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS
A group of students from all over the world who attend The United World College of Hong Kong pose for a group picture during a cultural performance designed to raise awareness of International Human Rights Day in Hong Kong Dec. 10. AFP

Halliburton gets more than $10B of work in Iraq

WASHINGTON—The largest US contractor in Iraq, Halliburton Co., has passed the $10 billion mark in work orders from the American Army for services supporting troops and rebuilding the country's oil industry.

The Army has $8.3 billion worth of work from Halliburton under a contract to support soldiers with meals, housing, laundry and other services. Halliburton got $2.5 billion more in work from the Army Corps of Engineers to put out oil well fires and shore up Iraq's dilapidated oil infrastructure.

Allegations of financial misdeeds, including corruption and overcharging, have led to criminal, congressional and Pentagon investigations of Halliburton's work in Iraq.

Congressional critics say George W. Bush's administration is going easy on the oil services company, which Vice President Dick Cheney ran from 1995 to 2000. Cheney and Halliburton deny any preferential treatment.

Rep. Henry Waxman of California, the top Democrat on the House government reform committee, has been one of the main congressional critics of Halliburton. Waxman issued a statement Thursday criticizing the Army's decision not to withhold partial payments to Halliburton while some accounting issues are straightened out.

"The mounting value of the contracts has been accompanied by a growing list of concerns about Halliburton's performance," the statement said.

Halliburton spokesperson Wendy Hall said the company has done a good job serving troops and helping to rebuild Iraq.

"This latest statement is simply recycling old, unfounded allegations in an effort to discredit a company that is providing much-needed services in support of our troops on the ground in the Iraq and Kuwait," Hall said.

The investigations of Halliburton's work in Iraq include:

- A criminal investigation into whether kickbacks were involved in Halliburton's use of a Kuwaiti subcontractor to provide gasoline for Iraq's civilian market. Halliburton says it notified federal authorities after an internal probe found two of its former employees may have been involved in corruption worth $6.3 million.
- A review of that fuel contract by the Defense Contract Audit Agency, which concluded Halliburton overcharged the Army by $61 million.
- An investigation by the former Coalition Provisional Authority's internal watchdog which found Halliburton could not account for scores of items in Iraq worth millions of dollars.
- A report by Congress' Government Accountability Office, which found a "pattern of contractor management problems" by the Army on Halliburton's largest Iraq contract. The nonpartisan GAO said the problems including taking more than a year to finalize the documentation on work orders worth billions of dollars.
- A Pentagon audit, which found that Halliburton charged the Army for meals it never served to troops. Halliburton said the problem was caused by the widely fluctuating levels of troops in and around Iraq. Halliburton has repaid $36 million and set aside more than $140 million for a possible settlement as it negotiates with the Army on that issue. *AP*

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Canada to change meaning of marriage to include gays

OTTAWA—Canada's Supreme Court on Thursday gave the government the go-ahead to change the definition of marriage, a famous victory for gay and lesbian groups battling for equal rights.

The ruling, on a draft law, cleared the final obstacle for Canada to follow the Netherlands and Belgium in authorizing same-sex marriage. Spain is moving in a similar direction.

Members of parliament are expected to back the law when the government introduces it to the House of Commons early next year.

The court also ruled that religious officials could not be compelled to marry same-sex couples, if the practice ran counter to their beliefs.

It declined to address the question of whether a change to the laws regarding same-sex marriage was required by the Constitution, a move that could complicate the task of shepherding the draft law through parliament.

Prime Minister Paul Martin said he had wrestled with the issue, but did not believe Canada could have "two classes of citizens."

"I think we are a very mature nation, I think we can undertake that kind of debate," he said.

Alex Munter, of lobby group Canadians for Equal Marriage, said the move reflected "Canadian values and Canadians' commitment to fairness."

Thursday's ruling was a blow to advocates of traditional marriage, who wanted the government to permit civil unions between couples of the same sex, but not sanction full-scale marriages.

"My position will be to preserve the traditional definition of marriage in the law," said opposition Conservative leader Stephen Harper.

"The government bill is going to be about obviously redefining," he said.

The government had taken the unusual step of asking for a Supreme Court ruling on draft legislation last year.

Government plans would see the definition of marriage changed to the "lawful union of two persons," rather than the "lawful union of one man and one woman."

While the government was waiting for a judgment before changing federal law on same-sex marriage, courts in six Canadian provinces and one territory had already ruled that same-sex marriage was legal. *AFP*

A NATIVITY scene from Poland is displayed during a "Joy to the World" exhibit Dec. 9 in Washington, DC. More than 150 nativity scenes from around the world will be displayed during the fourth annual international creche exhibit. AFP

Leading atheist now believes in God

By Richard N. Ostling

NEW YORK—A British philosophy professor who has been a leading champion of atheism for more than a half-century has changed his mind. He now believes in God—more or less—based on scientific evidence, and says so on a video released Thursday.

At age 81, after decades of insisting belief is a mistake, Antony Flew has concluded that some sort of intelligence or first cause must have created the universe. A super-intelligence is the only good explanation for the origin of life and the complexity of nature, Flew said in a telephone interview from England.

Flew said he's best labeled a deist like Thomas Jefferson, whose God was not actively involved in people's lives.

"I'm thinking of a God very different from the God of the Christian and far and away from the God of Islam, because both are depicted as omnipotent Oriental despots, cosmic Saddam Husseins," he said. "It could be a person in the sense of a being that has intelligence and a purpose, I suppose."

Flew first made his mark with the 1950 article "Theology and Falsification," based on a paper for the Socratic Club, a weekly Oxford religious forum led by writer and Christian thinker C.S. Lewis.

Over the years, Flew proclaimed the lack of evidence for God while teaching at Oxford, Aberdeen, Keele, and Reading universities in Britain, in visits to numerous US and Canadian campuses and in books, articles, lectures and debates.

There was no one moment of change but a gradual conclusion over recent months for Flew, a spry man who still does not believe in an afterlife.

Yet biologists' investigation of DNA "has shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce (life), that intelligence must have been involved," Flew says in the new video, "Has Science Discovered God?"

The video draws from a New York discussion last May organized by author Roy Abraham Varghese's Institute for Metascientific Research in Garland, Texas. Participants were Flew; Varghese; Israeli physicist Gerald Schroeder, an Orthodox Jew; and Roman Catholic philosopher John Haldane of Scotland's University of St. Andrews.

The first hint of Flew's turn was a letter to the August-September issue of Britain's Philosophy Now magazine. "It has become inordinately difficult even to begin to think about constructing a naturalistic theory of the evolution of that first reproducing organism," he wrote. *AP*

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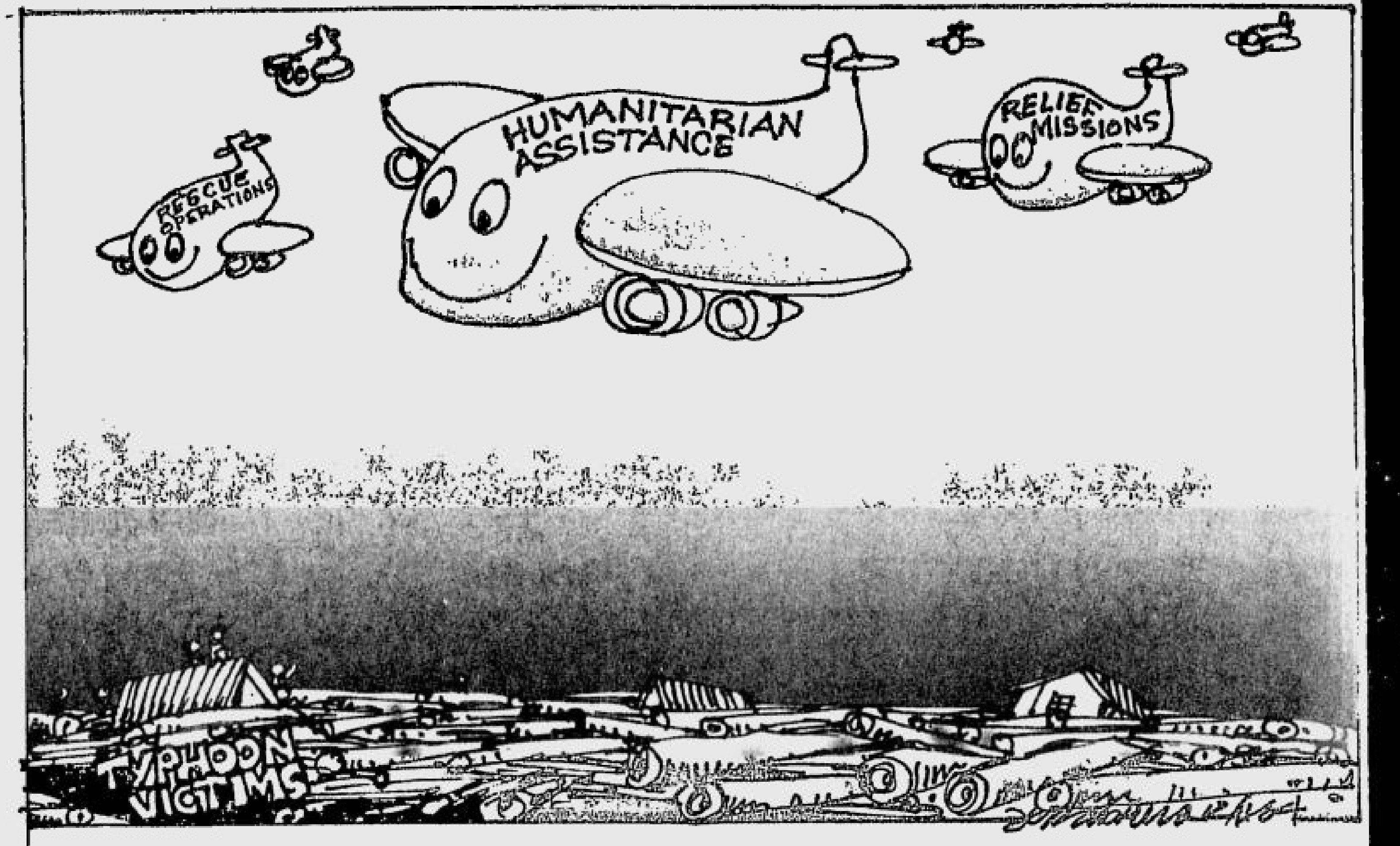

Rage

EDITORIAL

CONGRESSMEN seem to have been shocked by the results of a Pulse Asia survey showing an overwhelming majority of Filipinos rejecting the present pork barrel system. Many of them have challenged the polling organization to do a survey in their districts so that it would see how wrong its findings were. "The survey does not reflect the reality on the ground," House Deputy Majority Leader Eduardo Gullas complained. The reality is that "our constituents appreciate the projects we're bringing home through the pork barrel," he said.

They must have tiny constituencies, indeed. And these probably consist of little more than the contractors, project engineers, auditors, mayors and other local officials who get to share in the kickbacks (called "SOP")—after the lawmaker has taken the lion's share, of course. They will surely vote for the retention of the pork barrel and even ask that it be increased a hundredfold if possible.

As for the rest of the Filipinos, the general sentiment is for either the reduction of the size of the congressional pork barrel or its abolition altogether. According to the nationwide Pulse Asia poll, only 16 percent of the 1,200 people surveyed favored keeping the pork barrel at its present level. On the other hand, almost twice that number, or 30 percent, wanted it eliminated, while 54 percent believed the amount ought to be reduced. Which means that 84 percent are not exactly jumping with glee like chimpanzees over the way their money is being handled by their representatives in Congress.

And why should they? About 8 out of every 10 people surveyed (79 percent) believed that at least one-half of a project's cost went into the pockets of corrupt government officials, said Pulse Asia research fellow Emmanuel de Dios.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the survey findings simply validated his observation that "the wrongdoing of a few lawmakers . . . has created a negative public perception of the system." But he is being much too kind to his fellow lawmakers. If 79 percent of Filipinos believe that pork barrel projects are tainted with corruption, can that be the handiwork of just a few bad men? If that statistic proves anything, it is not that the perception of corruption is widespread but that corruption is really widespread. Lawmakers may think they can fool all of the people all of the time, but this survey shows that they cannot fool most of the people most of the time.

And yet, De Dios observed, even as "prevalent opinion" considers most pork-barrel projects to be tainted with corruption, there remains a "widespread belief that it is a legislator's duty to deliver projects and programs to his constituents." "The majority call for merely reducing, rather than totally eliminating, the pork barrel appears to be a pragmatic compromise," he said.

This is probably the most disturbing finding of all: that so many are convinced that taxpayers' money is being stolen and yet so few would demand that the source of graft and corruption be shut off completely. Maybe corrupt practices have become so commonplace and so ordinary that they no longer shock or scandalize us. It seems as if we have learned to accept corruption not only as a fact of life but as a way of life, as former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew once put it. And we have lost our sense of outrage and our capacity to rage against official wrongdoing.

But rage we must unless we intend to allow our lawmakers to continue picking our pockets in the guise of serving us. It is not other people's money that they are stealing, it is our money. They are fattening themselves at the expense of those who have nothing to eat.

Gloomy lesson

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE TERRORIST attack on the US consulate in Jeddah was a grim reminder that (Osama bin Laden's) acolytes are still able to operate at will in the kingdom. Quick responses by Saudi security forces ensured that casualties and damage were limited, though the choice of target—one of the most heavily defended in the country—was itself a signal that al-Qaida and its offshoots have not given up. In recent months, the Saudi authorities have arrested and killed many members of what they choose to call "deviant groups"—emphasizing the departure from the true path of Islam—while weapons finds have become sparser.

The Saudi government ... argues that it has the situation well under control. ... But pessimists warn that it is only realistic to expect future attacks on the mighty Saudi oil industry, the reason for the country's close relationship with the United States. The gloomy lesson of recent years is that the pessimists in the Middle East are all too often proved right.

The Guardian (London)

Unenforced convictions are acquittals

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

FORMER SENATE President Jovito R. Salonga sent me by personal delivery copy of the letter of Bantay Katarungan to Solicitor General Alfredo L. Benipayo dated Oct. 30, 2004 and received by his office on Nov. 2, regarding the conviction in 1995 of Ferdinand (Bongbong) Marcos Jr. for tax evasion.

The case was decided against the accused by the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City (Branch 105) on July 25, 1997 and appealed to the Court of Appeals, which affirmed the sentence on Oct. 31, 1997. Through Justice Gloria C. Paras, the dispositive portion of the judgment read:

"WHEREFORE, the Decision of the Trial Court is hereby MODIFIED as follows:

1. Acquitting the accused appellant of the charges of violation of Sec. 50 of the NLRC for non-payment of deficiency taxes for the taxable years 1982 to 1985 in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-92-29216, Q-92-29215, Q-92-29214 and Q-91-24390; and finding him guilty beyond reasonable doubt for violation of Sec. 45 of the NLRC for failure to file income tax returns for the taxable years 1982 to 1985 in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-91-24391, Q-92-29212, Q-92-29213 and Q-92-29217.

2. Ordering the appellant to pay to the BIR, the deficiency income taxes due with interest at the legal rate until fully paid.

3. Ordering the appellant to pay a fine of P2,000.00 for each charge in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-92-29213, Q-92-29212 and Q-92-29217 for failure to file income tax returns for the years 1982, 1983 and 1984, and the fine of P30,000.00 in Criminal Case No. Q-91-24391 for failure to file income tax return for 1985, with surcharges.

The accused manifested his intention to file a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court and moved for extension of time to do so, but he never did. Thus the decision of the Court of Appeals became final and executory seven years ago but has not yet been implemented to date.

The letter ended: "In view of the worsening fiscal crisis, as stated by the 11 U.P. economists, as published in the papers last August 23, 2004, and the determination of the President to pursue with vigor all tax evasion cases, we ask that immediate steps be taken so that the long-delayed execution of judgment of conviction against the said accused is carried out and the rule of law be enforced, without fear or favor."

It was signed by Salonga as adviser and trustee of Bantay Katarungan, Ambassador Sedfrey A. Ordoñez as its chairman, and Emilio C. Capulong Jr., as its executive director. Each of them is a civic-minded citizen with no personal animosity toward the convict but only a sincere regard for the observance of the rule of law as interpreted and applied by our courts.

Knowing Solicitor General Benipayo, I am hopeful that he has taken the necessary steps to effect execution of the judgment considering the long delay of this case since it was commenced nine years ago. A sentence that is not executed through neglect or, worse, intentionally, operates as an acquittal that benefits the convict and mocks the administration of justice. It becomes especially suspicious if, as in this case, the judgment that still waits to be enforced is against a person who appears to still enjoy undeserved privileges as he did during the dictatorship of his father.

I am reminded at this point of another adverse decision against the Marcoses that as far as I know has also not yet been executed since it became final as early as 1999. This was the P23.5 billion judgment against Imelda and her children, also for tax deficiency. I understand that it has become practically useless because of the supposed inability of the government to find properties belonging to the Marcos estate. Imelda's shoes alone would cost a fortune, but she is supposed to be a pauper litigant.

A beggar lolling in luxury is an oxymoron! Some years ago, Imelda Marcos celebrated her birthday with a lavish party fit for the Queen of Sheba. Allowed to go to the United States for medical treatment, she made an expensive detour to Europe, where she attended the elegant wedding of a niece in Paris. Only recently, she was one of the jeweled guests at the anniversary celebration of a high-priced couturier where only the fabled rich were invited.

Another case that comes to mind is the trial court's estafa conviction of Annabelle Rama that became final in 1995. Claiming that she was physically unfit to be imprisoned, she asked the Court of Appeals for a restraining order, which it granted. The government appealed to the Supreme Court and that is the last I have heard of her case. Has the judgment against her been reversed or is it still slumbering with similar effect? I ask because she is free as a bird and has reportedly gone abroad several times without judicial restriction.

Judicial decisions are not mere paper tigers for law students to study like abstract lessons unrelated to actual cases. They are commands issued by the courts of justice for the protection of society against those who would disdain it. Tragically, many of such mandates are simply ignored for the benefit of privileged or paying parties. The government may not (intentionally) have the will or (allegedly) the means to enforce them. Alas.

Fortune versus the Filipino

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

"INDEED, it is fair to say that if this piece of legislation is not passed and signed **before the end of this year**, the entire government's credibility with respect to the entire fiscal—and debt—problem will have been irretrievably lost."

This part of the paper by the "UP 11" (emphasis theirs), written four months ago, refers to the sin tax bill. So why should it take so long to pass such a bill, especially when it has been discussed already in at least two past Congresses?

The question is valid, because there are really only two simple changes that have to be made in the current sin tax law (RA 8424) for it to perform as expected, or even better. One is an addition, the other a subtraction.

The addition is a provision that was in the original Comprehensive Tax Reform package: that the sin tax levels should be adjusted periodically to reflect inflation, i.e., indexation. The subtraction comes with the deletion of a provision that was not in either the House or the Senate bills in 1997 but was inserted during the bicameral committee negotiations: "The classification of each brand of cigarettes based on its average net retail price as of October 1, 1996, as set forth in Annex 'D', shall remain in force until revised by Congress." Innocuous as it sounds (for what could possibly be dangerous about a listing?), it has proved deadly in its impact (which is why I call it a poison pill).

What is the impact? First, it has given unfair competitive advantage over the years to the brands existing in 1996 over those introduced after that year, because the latter pay sin taxes based on their current net retail prices, while the former pay taxes based on their net retail prices in 1996. In effect, Congress created an uneven playing field in the cigarette industry.

Second, it has deprived the government of tax revenues that make the expected additional take from the recently approved House Bill 3174 and the Recto bill (SB 1854), which is currently under discussion, look puny in comparison. For 2004 alone, if the cigarette brands existing in 1996 were to pay taxes based on their current average net retail prices instead of on what they were eight years ago as provided by the poison pill provision, it is estimated (using 2003 removals) that the additional revenue collected would be about P22 billion. Compare this to the P4 billion and P3 billion in the Recto and House bills, respectively.

Actually, if push comes to shove, our legislators don't even have to add the indexation provision. They just have to delete that poison pill provision. Why? Because in effect, if all cigarette brands were to be taxed according to their current average net retail prices, their continuing increases will ensure that eventually only the highest specific tax (P13.44) remains—leading to a uniform tax for all brands, which is what the Enrile bill wants to achieve, using other means. Right now, for example, without the poison pill provision, there would be very few, if any, cigarette brands that would be classified under the P1.12 specific tax bracket (i.e., those whose average net retail price is at most P5).

So there is nothing wrong, and everything right, with removing that poison pill provision. It will create an even playing field in the cigarette industry. It will bring government the much needed revenues and in really meaningful amounts. There will be no need to argue anymore about the effect of increased taxes on the poor (the tax levels will be the same as they were in 1997, for heaven's sake). And it could be passed in the blink of an eye.

And yet neither HB 3174 or the Recto bill even advert to it. Neither does the Enrile bill for that matter, but there is a profound difference: this bill ensures that the same end is achieved as by removing the poison pill, except he uses different means.

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So now it seems the fight boils down to Fortune Tobacco versus the Filipino people. The House of Representatives, whether it realizes it or not, has made its choice. Now it is the Senate's turn.

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Rage

EDITORIAL

CONGRESSMEN seem to have been shocked by the results of a Pulse Asia survey showing an overwhelming majority of Filipinos rejecting the present pork barrel system. Many of them have challenged the polling organization to do a survey in their districts so that it would see how wrong its findings were. "The survey does not reflect the reality on the ground," House Deputy Majority Leader Eduardo Gullas complained. The reality is that "our constituents appreciate the projects we're bringing home through the pork barrel," he said.

They must have tiny constituencies, indeed. And these probably consist of little more than the contractors, project engineers, auditors, mayors and other local officials who get to share in the kickbacks (called "SOP")—after the lawmaker has taken the lion's share, of course. They will surely vote for the retention of the pork barrel and even ask that it be increased a hundredfold if possible.

As for the rest of the Filipinos, the general sentiment is for either the reduction of the size of the congressional pork barrel or its abolition altogether. According to the nationwide Pulse Asia poll, only 16 percent of the 1,200 people surveyed favored keeping the pork barrel at its present level. On the other hand, almost twice that number, or 30 percent, wanted it eliminated, while 54 percent believed the amount ought to be reduced. Which means that 84 percent are not exactly jumping with glee like chimpanzees over the way their money is being handled by their representatives in Congress.

And why should they? About 8 out of every 10 people surveyed (79 percent) believed that at least one-half of a project's cost went into the pockets of corrupt government officials, said Pulse Asia research fellow Emmanuel de Dios.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the survey findings simply validated his observation that "the wrongdoing of a few lawmakers . . . has created a negative public perception of the system." But he is being much too kind to his fellow lawmakers. If 79 percent of Filipinos believe that pork barrel projects are tainted with corruption, can that be the handiwork of just a few bad men? If that statistic proves anything, it is not that the perception of corruption is widespread but that corruption is really widespread. Lawmakers may think they can fool all of the people all of the time, but this survey shows that they cannot fool most of the people most of the time.

And yet, De Dios observed, even as "prevalent opinion" considers most pork-barrel projects to be tainted with corruption, there remains a "widespread belief that it is a legislator's duty to deliver projects and programs to his constituents." "The majority call for merely reducing, rather than totally eliminating, the pork barrel appears to be a pragmatic compromise," he said.

This is probably the most disturbing finding of all: that so many are convinced that taxpayers' money is being stolen and yet so few would demand that the source of graft and corruption be shut off completely. Maybe corrupt practices have become so commonplace and so ordinary that they no longer shock or scandalize us. It seems as if we have learned to accept corruption not only as a fact of life but as a way of life, as former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew once put it. And we have lost our sense of outrage and our capacity to rage against official wrongdoing.

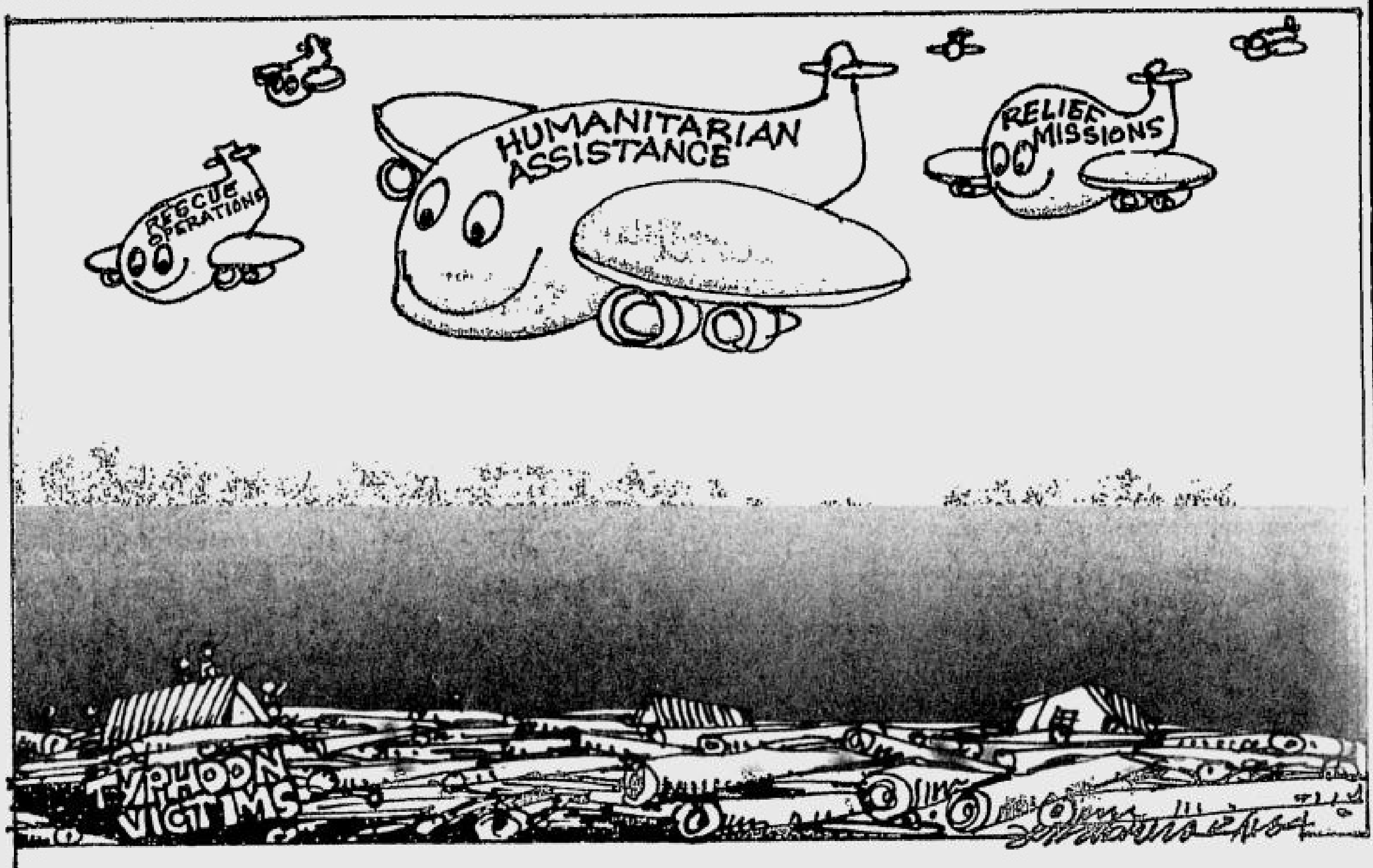
But rage we must unless we intend to allow our lawmakers to continue picking our pockets in the guise of serving us. It is not other people's money that they are stealing, it is our money. They are fattening themselves at the expense of those who have nothing to eat.

Gloomy lesson

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE TERRORIST attack on the US consulate in Jeddah was a grim reminder that (Osama bin Laden's) acolytes are still able to operate at will in the kingdom. Quick responses by Saudi security forces ensured that casualties and damage were limited, though the choice of target—one of the most heavily defended in the country—was itself a signal that al-Qaida and its offshoots have not given up. In recent months, the Saudi authorities have arrested and killed many members of what they choose to call "deviant groups"—emphasizing the departure from the true path of Islam—while weapons finds have become sparser.

The Saudi government ... argues that it has the situation well under control. ... But pessimists warn that it is only realistic to expect future attacks on the mighty Saudi oil industry, the reason for the country's close relationship with the United States. The gloomy lesson of recent years is that the pessimists in the Middle East are all too often proved right. *The Guardian (London)*



Unenforced convictions are acquittals

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

FORMER SENATE President Jovito R. Salonga sent me by personal delivery copy of the letter of Bantay Katarungan to Solicitor General Alfredo L. Benipayo dated Oct. 30, 2004 and received by his office on Nov. 2, regarding the conviction in 1995 of Ferdinand (Bongbong) Marcos Jr. for tax evasion.

The case was decided against the accused by the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City (Branch 105) on July 25, 1997 and appealed to the Court of Appeals, which affirmed the sentence on Oct. 31, 1997. Through Justice Gloria C. Paras, the dispositive portion of the judgment read:

"WHEREFORE, the Decision of the Trial Court is hereby MODIFIED as follows:

1. Acquitting the accused appellant of the charges of violation of Sec. 50 of the NLRC for non-payment of deficiency taxes for the taxable years 1982 to 1985 in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-92-29216, Q-92-29215, Q-92-29214 and Q-91-24390; and finding him guilty beyond reasonable doubt for violation of Sec. 45 of the NLRC for failure to file income tax returns for the taxable years 1982 to 1985 in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-91-24391, Q-92-29212, Q-92-29213 and Q-92-29217.

2. Ordering the appellant to pay to the BIR, the deficiency income taxes due with interest at the legal rate until fully paid.

3. Ordering the appellant to pay a fine of P2,000.00 for each charge in Criminal Cases Nos. Q-92-29213, Q-92-29212 and Q-92-29217 for failure to file income tax returns for the years 1982, 1983 and 1984, and the fine of P30,000.00 in Criminal Case No. Q-91-24391 for failure to file income tax return for 1985, with surcharges.

The accused manifested his intention to file a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court and moved for extension of time to do so, but he never did. Thus the decision of the Court of Appeals became final and executory seven years ago but has not yet been implemented to date.

The letter ended: "In view of the worsening fiscal crisis, as stated by the 11 U.P. economists, as published in the papers last August 23, 2004, and the determination of the President to pursue with vigor all tax evasion cases, we ask that immediate steps be taken so that the long-delayed execution of judgment of conviction against the said accused is carried out and the rule of law be enforced, without fear or favor."

It was signed by Salonga as adviser and trustee of Bantay Katarungan, Ambassador Sedfrey A. Ordoñez as its chairman, and Emilio C. Capulong Jr., as its executive director. Each of them is a civic-minded citizen with no personal animosity toward the convict but only a sincere regard for the observance of the rule of law as interpreted and applied by our courts.

Knowing Solicitor General Benipayo, I am hopeful that he has taken the necessary steps to effect execution of the judgment considering the long delay of this case since it was commenced nine years ago. A sentence that is not executed through neglect or, worse, intentionally, operates as an acquittal that benefits the convict and mocks the administration of justice. It becomes especially suspicious if, as in this case, the judgment that still waits to be enforced is against a person who appears to still enjoy undeserved privileges as he did during the dictatorship of his father.

I am reminded at this point of another adverse decision against the Marcoses that as far as I know has also not yet been executed since it became final as early as 1999. This was the P23.5 billion judgment against Imelda and her children, also for tax deficiency. I understand that it has become practically useless because of the supposed inability of the government to find properties belonging to the Marcos estate. Imelda's shoes alone would cost a fortune, but she is supposed to be a pauper litigant.

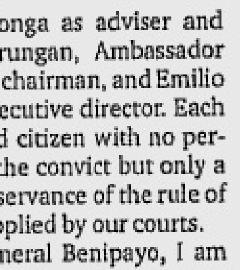
A beggar lolling in luxury is an oxymoron! Some years ago, Imelda Marcos celebrated her birthday with a lavish party fit for the Queen of Sheba. Allowed to go to the United States for medical treatment, she made an expensive detour to Europe, where she attended the elegant wedding of a niece in Paris. Only recently, she was one of the jeweled guests at the anniversary celebration of a high-priced couturier where only the fabled rich were invited.

Another case that comes to mind is the trial court's estafa conviction of Annabelle Rama that became final in 1995. Claiming that she was physically unfit to be imprisoned, she asked the Court of Appeals for a restraining order, which it granted. The government appealed to the Supreme Court and that is the last I have heard of her case. Has the judgment against her been reversed or is it still slumbering with similar effect? I ask because she is free as a bird and has reportedly gone abroad several times without judicial restriction.

Judicial decisions are not mere paper tigers for law students to study like abstract lessons unrelated to actual cases. They are commands issued by the courts of justice for the protection of society against those who would disdain it. Tragically, many of such mandates are simply ignored for the benefit of privileged or paying parties. The government may not (intentionally) have the will or (allegedly) the means to enforce them. Alas.

Fortune versus the Filipino

GET REAL



Solita Collas-Monsod

"INDEED, it is fair to say that if this piece of legislation is not passed and signed before the end of this year, the entire government's credibility with respect to the entire fiscal—and debt—problem will have been irretrievably lost."

This part of the paper by the "UP 11" (emphasis theirs), written four months ago, refers to the sin tax bill. So why should it take so long to pass such a bill, especially when it has been discussed already in at least two past Congresses?

The question is valid, because there are really only two simple changes that have to be made in the current sin tax law (RA 8424) for it to perform as expected, or even better. One is an addition, the other a subtraction.

The addition is a provision that was in the original Comprehensive Tax Reform package: that the sin tax levels should be adjusted periodically to reflect inflation, i.e., indexation. The subtraction comes with the deletion of a provision that was not in either the House or the Senate bills in 1997 but was inserted during the bicameral committee negotiations: "The classification of each brand of cigarettes based on its average net retail price as of October 1, 1996, as set forth in Annex 'D', shall remain in force until revised by Congress." Innocuous as it sounds (for what could possibly be dangerous about a listing?), it has proved deadly in its impact (which is why I call it a poison pill).

What is the impact? First, it has given unfair competitive advantage over the years to the brands existing in 1996 over those introduced after that year, because the latter pay sin taxes based on their current net retail prices, while the former pay taxes based on their net retail prices in 1996. In effect, Congress created an uneven playing field in the cigarette industry.

Second, it has deprived the government of tax revenues that make the expected additional take from the recently approved House Bill 3174 and the Recto bill (SB 1854), which is currently under discussion, look puny in comparison. For 2004 alone, if the cigarette brands existing in 1996 were to pay taxes based on their current average net retail prices instead of on what they were eight years ago as provided by the poison pill provision, it is estimated (using 2003 removals) that the additional revenue collected would be about P22 billion. Compare this to the P4 billion and P3 billion in the Recto and House bills, respectively.

Actually, if push comes to shove, our legislators don't even have to add the indexation provision. They just have to delete that poison pill provision. Why? Because in effect, if all cigarette brands were to be taxed according to their current average net retail prices, their continuing increases will ensure that eventually only the highest specific tax (P13.44) remains—leading to a uniform tax for all brands, which is what the Enrile bill wants to achieve, using other means. Right now, for example, without the poison pill provision, there would be very few, if any, cigarette brands that would be classified under the P1.12 specific tax bracket (i.e., those whose average net retail price is at most P5).

So there is nothing wrong, and everything right, with removing that poison pill provision. It will create an even playing field in the cigarette industry. It will bring government the much needed revenues and in really meaningful amounts. There will be no need to argue anymore about the effect of increased taxes on the poor (the tax levels will be the same as they were in 1997, for heaven's sake). And it could be passed in the blink of an eye.

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But now we have to ask: Why do the two bills pretend that the poison pill in the 1997 law does not exist? Or better still, having identified the losers because of the poison pill insertion, we must now ask, who were the winners? Identifying them would also show who would lose the most if the poison pill provision were deleted, and who therefore would have worked (obviously with marked success thus far) to keep the provision in.

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So now it seems the fight boils down to Fortune Tobacco versus the Filipino people. The House of Representatives, whether it realizes it or not, has made its choice. Now it is the Senate's turn.

Cory's prayer power

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FORMER PRESIDENT Cory Aquino, along with five other international leaders, among them former Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel and Timorese President Xanana Gusmao, recently received the Averell Harriman Democracy Award in Washington, D.C., from the National Democratic Institution, chaired by former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. They were universally recognized as "courageous leaders of a worldwide movement to promote peaceful political change" in various continents. Albright paid tribute to Cory's role in the non-violent Edsa Revolution that swept away a dictator and restored democracy here.

It proved quite timely—and refreshing—therefore, for a capacity crowd in Makati City to be reminded late last month of the Edsa spirit that was honored a week later in Washington, D.C. At a symposium to celebrate Ninoy Aquino's birth anniversary, Cory traced how she and Ninoy "converged on the spiritual path" from opposite poles. In the end, God's plan prevailed: Ninoy became a martyr for peace, but his widow ended up dislodging Marcos from his 20-year presidency.

* * *

Cory described Ninoy as a very public person in whose veins ran politics; it was no secret that he had hoped to be the Liberal Party standard-bearer in 1973. By contrast, she was a very private person whose top priority was to be "a good wife and mother." Cory said she always prayed every day, especially during Ninoy's imprisonment of seven years and seven months, and learned to accept God's will. She traced Ninoy's "journey of spiritual rediscovery" during his long incarceration, even as his helplessness and powerlessness over his fate were so tough on the politician, who had always seemed in command of every situation. "Full of bitterness at the start, Ninoy seriously questioned the foundations of his faith. How could a just God, after all, permit such an injustice to be inflicted upon him?"

* * *

But gradually it dawned on him, said Cory, that he was being made to suffer for a reason deeper than the human mind could comprehend. With no one to talk to, especially during his solitary confinement at Fort Magsaysay, Ninoy turned to God and began to search for the "greater meaning" in his life. Steeping himself in the teachings of Jose Rizal, Mahatma Gandhi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King, he began to understand the wisdom of the non-violent road toward social change. "It must have brought him to the conclusion that the Filipino is worth dying for, and indeed his martyrdom would awaken the very best in our people," she said.

* * *

In the end, Cory said, she and Ninoy came to the same realization about the meaning of the sacrifice they had to make. She admitted they had their own "difficult moments of seeming hopelessness and helplessness," but fortunately, "Ninoy and I did not feel hopeless and helpless at the same time." As God would have it, he was slain at the tarmac, and as she kissed him for the last time in his coffin, she promised to continue his efforts to restore democracy and support the leaders of the opposition.

"At that time, I certainly was not thinking about aspiring for the presidency," said Cory, but in the end she became a reluctant candidate as some opposition leaders said they would only give way to her. She spent a whole day in the chapel of the Pink Sisters agonizing over that decision. At the end of the day, she tearfully told the mother superior that she had decided to run. "I must be the only candidate to ever announce her candidacy crying," she quipped.

* * *

Cory recalled that during her presidency, she would turn to reflection and "my not-so-secret weapon," prayer, to help her make the right decision that would best serve the people. Today as a private citizen, she says, she confronts difficult situations the same way.

Inevitably she had to grapple with the Hacienda Luisita episode—in her own style. Cory said a labor leader spurned her offer of prayers for those affected by the tragic developments at Luisita, and that she couldn't blame him entirely for reacting thus. "But my offer of prayers is really an invitation for both sides in the conflict to spend time in reflection, and with God's help discern what's best for all concerned," she said. What makes this period of reflection vital, she said, is that "despite their differences, both labor and management want to promote the welfare of the farm and mill workers." Whatever the lasting and peaceful solution might be, she said, "what's important is for all parties concerned to reflect on what is most beneficial to the greatest number, and to come to terms on the basis of a shared humanity."

Her philosophy of life may be difficult for radical elements to appreciate, but it has borne this woman through burdens seemingly too heavy for her to carry. As they say, more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

* * *

Everybody loves a good romance, and the House of Representatives is no exception. It's tickled pink by what looks like a romance blossoming in its midst. Reports say that two neophyte lawmakers are beginning to make beautiful music together: 40-year old Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr., who filled the seat vacated by his father, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez Sr., and Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc, who filled the seat vacated by her brother, Emigdio "Rimpy" Bondoc, who ran for Pampanga governor and lost last May to Mark Lapid. Few know that Anna, who is in her early 30s, is a US-trained oncologist practicing at St. Luke's Hospital when she's not in Congress. Colleagues insist that the two neophytes are already on a "texting stage," but Speaker Jose de Venecia, who seems to be more excited about the budding romance than the Iloilo lawmaker's parents, predicts that wedding bells will ring within 90 days.

To the Inquirer—mwah!

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

LAST year marked my 15th year with the Inquirer, which I joined in 1988. There was supposed to be a ceremony honoring Inquirer employees marking significant milestones with the company, but I was in the middle of preparations for my silver wedding anniversary the next day, not to mention getting ready for the betrothal ceremonies of a niece who had come all the way from the United States for the rites, so I failed to make it for the awards.

The next evening, the Inquirer table was largely empty, simply because my wedding anniversary happens to fall on the same day as the Inquirer's. That's been the story so far every Dec. 9, with me having to choose between observing a personal milestone and joining the celebration of another but no less important family. A day of infamy—and of hard choices—indeed!

But even if I'm usually absent from the big to-do at the PDI building, missing the grand show and the presence of our high-wattage guests from show business and politics, that doesn't mean I don't share the warm and fuzzy feelings that overcome the usually cynical folks at Inquirer editorial come our anniversary.

I remember reading an article many years back in praise of the Boston Globe and its heralded editor, where an admirer said that "you can tell a good paper when no one wants to leave it." Pardon me, but that's how I, and I bet the rest of the Inquirer staff, feel about working for the Inquirer. Being identified with this paper fills me with pride, and not just because we're "Number 1," but also because our paper is regarded with respect and admiration. I know, I know, all you detractors can lower those raised brows.

The Inquirer may have its flaws (and the staff would be among the first to admit to these), but even its harshest critics must admit that given the landscape of Philippine journalism, and the challenges it has had to weather, the Inquirer has set a towering presence. So pardon us for this rare instance of crowing.

* * *

SOME weeks back, Inquirer founder and former chairperson Eggie Apostol delivered her address as the first Plaridel Awardee of the UP College of Mass Communications. Her talk was supposed to be on press freedom, but it turned out to be about press freedom as practiced by the Inquirer. Though her name has since been removed from the masthead of this paper (at her request), it's clear that the paper she founded is still very much in Eggie Apostol's mind. You can take Eggie out of the Inquirer, but you clearly can't take her "baby" out of Eggie's mind or heart.

Recalling the history, and even the "pre-history" of the Inquirer, she reminded her audience—composed of friends from the journalistic field including much of the editorial staff of the Inquirer, as well as a big number of journalism students and faculty—that this paper was born amid the turbulence of the post-Aquino assassination protests and in preparation for the coverage of both the Agrava commission hearings (as a weekly) and the snap election campaign (as a daily).

As Eggie remembered it, the Inquirer was but a gleam in her eye when she convened, as the hearings on the Aquino assassination were getting underway, a meeting among the few "independent" publishers at the time on the possibility and feasibility of putting up a daily newspaper that would defy the limitations imposed on the "crony" press of the Marcoses. The other publishers demurred, citing financial difficulties and a distaste for yet another confrontation with the dictator, but typical of her gutsy style of doing business, she together with a few other investors decided to leap into the void and create a publication which birthed the newspaper you now hold in your hands (or the website you are viewing onscreen).

* * *

THAT history, I think is what gives the Inquirer its edge, the factor that keeps this paper's coverage fresh and truly responsive to the changing times—be it advances in technology, shifting tastes and reader demands, and even styles of coverage.

Newspapers these days, for instance, seem more and more like compilations of short features, in contrast to, say, a decade ago, when the front pages were filled with short, terse news bulletins. Newspaper stories are not only longer and filled with "background" today, they are also heavy on human interest and color detail.

This is in response to the realization that radio and TV and even the Internet do "breaking news" stories so much better, being able to broadcast news of an event shortly after or even while it is transpiring. Newspapers are still filled with "yesterday's" news, still journals of the day that had gone before. But there is no better source for readers who want more, demanding explanation, analysis, color and the human aspect of events and issues.

* * *

HERE then is a heartfelt mwah! to the Inquirer on its 19th year. Last year, management likened the paper to a debutante, whose 18th year is supposed to mark one's "introduction" to society and maturity. This year, the theme is "Inquirer Rocks!" emphasizing our ever-youthful identity. But 19 is also just a few years away from adulthood, which means that this paper is no longer the "new kid on the block" or even the audacious teenager that its editors seem to believe the paper should adopt as its permanent identity.

So let this birthday card to the paper I write for end with a quote from the comic strip about that perennial teen icon Spiderman. "With great power comes great responsibility." The Inquirer at 19 now finds itself wielding enormous power and influence, and not just on newsprint but even in cyberspace and TV air lanes. May our paper prove capable of rising to the full promise of its growing power.

A tiger on steroids

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

CHINA is no longer described as a sleeping dragon but "a tiger on steroids," if we are to believe Charlene Barshefsky, former US trade representative. It has $515 billion in foreign reserves and its productivity has grown 17 percent annually for the past five years.

Americans in general have awakened to the fact that competition from China is wrecking havoc on US industries from furniture, to car tires, to precision tools and as such creating not just unemployment in the millions but a nightmarish deficit. Publication after publication carries articles alerting the people of the situation where "a massive shift in economic power is under way." A December issue of BusinessWeek offers four major articles, including the cover story on "The China Price," reputedly the three scariest words in US industry.

Consider the following: A company based in Ohio bid $2.07 million to supply plastic molds to a US appliance maker. It lost the bid to a Chinese supplier who bid $1.44 million, a price gap of nearly 50 percent. A $120-million tile manufacturer with a factory the size of four football fields sought Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and may even close down as Chinese tile imports entering the US market are priced below its manufacturing costs. A maker of precision machine tools and plastic molds in Illinois has seen its business shrink to half of its level in the 1990s and its workforce reduced by a third. Some 2.7 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since 2000 and the US trade deficit with China may surpass $150 billion this year. Thanks to sky-high oil prices, the overall deficit may reach $600 billion this year and add another $50 billion next year.

Chinese goods are costing 30 to 50 percent less and at worst even below the cost of materials in the United States. With Honda and Nissan planning to export cars from China, there is even talk that China could become a major car exporter. The threat to industry and employment is real when Felxtronics Corp., a contract manufacturer, employs 41,000 Chinese in their factory in Doumen, making cell phones, game consoles, PCs and other hardware and hiring Chinese engineers with another 720,000 sq. ft. factory going up.

In the past, US companies relied on "advanced skills, heavy investment and proximity to customers." But with multinationals setting up shop in China, this no longer holds true. China is producing 350,000 engineers annually and workers put in 12-hour days, including on weekends. From a low of $120 a month for factory workers to $2,000 for chip designers, there are few countries that will be able to stand up to the China price.

On the plus side, cheap Chinese goods have kept "inflation low, fueled consumer boom that has helped weather a recession and kept its global growth on track" with outsourcing. The downside is the huge trade deficit. The US balance of payments deficit is 6 percent of its GDP and most projections aver it will keep widening.

There are a number of steps the United States can take that would help shrink that deficit. Suggestions range from cracking down on intellectual property theft and dumping to prohibiting subsidies and violations of trade laws. The United States may even succeed in hiking the value of the yuan by 15 percent (not 30 percent as it would prefer) through negotiations even as the dollar keeps sliding against the euro, the yen and the South Korean won.

Now you may be wondering why I am telling you all this. What is it to you and to me in this season of consumerism? Well, as any Filipina with a shop-till-you-drop mentality (and you must admit there is any number of them) knows, the goods flooding malls in Divisoria, Binondo, Tutuban, Quiapo and Greenhills are mostly Chinese products that are not only cheap but better made than anything we can produce at a comparable price. Even local designer clothes are reportedly being cut and sewn in China using Chinese textiles.

So my question is, where does that leave us? I mean, I hate to ruin your holidays, but it's not as if this is something new. Some three years ago, Thailand's prime minister already outlined its economic defense against the Chinese behemoth. They would go high end and of course, there is their tourism industry which boasts of some 11 million visitors a year. According to another of those depressing statistics, it will take us up to 2009 to catch up to where Thailand is now, but only if we put reforms in place.

It would help boost our confidence if somebody in our government would speak up and outline what the Philippines will do about the problem. Read any of our dailies and we get an overload of disaster news (generally due to human greed and stupidity), corruption scandals (has anyone been charged with economic sabotage ever?) and press releases from our legislators who apparently must be casting a moist eye at Malacañang in six years. They're either making motherhood statements and boring us senseless or protecting their pork barrel to the death, but they're not coming up with anything that makes sense against the Chinese juggernaut.

So, who knows, instead of a Christmas card this year, perhaps they'll come up with a proposal on how the nation can survive in this brave, new world? Merry Christmas to them, too.

* * *

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

Through mother's eyes

YOUNG BLOOD

Ina Si

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

I AM 22 years old. I've been single all my life. And I've never really been in love. So what makes me think I can judge other people's relationships?

My mother has been a widow for nine years now. For the past two years, she's been seeing a man. I don't mind her dating. But with her current relationship, I can never really be comfortable.

I thought it would be simple. She's happy. He's happy. So I should be happy for them, too.

But that's not everything. He is a married man. She has fallen for the wrong guy. They should just stop seeing each other.

I'm lost. By sharing this story, I hope someone will tell me what to do and help me understand and accept.

Happiness is so complicated. Morality is so complicated. Love is so complicated. Life is so complicated.

Where do we draw the line between right and wrong? When can we be selfish and when should we become selfless? When do we pursue our own happiness and when do we sacrifice it? How do we choose between love and what is right? If we have found true love in the wrong place do we have to give it up? When should the self end and the other begin? Should it always be others before you? Shouldn't we allow ourselves a certain happiness?

I have to understand. I have to put myself in my mother's shoes, see things through her own eyes. And this is how she sees it:

I fell in love with a married man and that married man fell in love with me. It was not a passing fancy. I think it was true love, because we did not need carnal pleasure to solidify it. We cared for each other and brought the best out of each other. We were happy when we were together. We made each other really happy.

Then he separated from his wife. But it was not only because of me. They had been having problems since the start of their marriage and after 23 years of trying to work things out, the marriage just couldn't be fixed. His wife always pushed him away. So I was not the main cause of their separation. I just happened to be there.

What he had been looking for in his life he found in me. His sadness and hopelessness were transformed by me. His loneliness and emptiness were filled by me. (But are we allowed to give up on relationships or do we have to keep on going no matter how hard or how unhappy we are? Are we never going to find happiness in this world?)

But other people could not understand. To them it was simple: a man had left his wife and children for another woman. They could not understand that it was not about sex. We were friends, very special friends. We loved each other and cared for each other. We could spend the whole day together and that would be enough. He loved not only me but my family as well. But people, even my family, could not see the situation in any other way because even before he separated from his wife, I was already there.

Is what I am doing wrong? Should I just give up this love, this happiness? I have not felt the love, care and protection of a man for so long. I have not been this happy ever since the first love of my life left me. Am I just being selfish?

Every time I think about giving him up, it hurts. I don't think I could bear it. We are happy. We are in love. We are very special friends.

Why can't people understand? I am 52. They should realize that I know what I am doing.

Ina Si, 22, is a graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University. She had to use a pen name on account of the sensitive topic she wrote about.

Abandoned

Mellany Malotoc

HE was young, vulnerable. At 17, just like other kids, he used to dream of being a successful artist whose name was known everywhere in the world of arts. He wanted to accomplish something that would make his mother feel proud and happy. He wanted to help his mother, his sole inspiration. He wished he could give her everything money could buy.

So many young dreams. So many ambitions. But in the wink of an eye, they were all gone. His dreams had been shattered. His life had turned into a nightmare.

It started when his mother, at 37, married for the second time. The guy was 26 and a drunkard. They were not really married legally—just living under one roof.

With his "stepfather" in the house, he felt like he had been dumped by his own mother. He was hurt whenever he saw his mother caring and pampering his stepfather. The house became hell for him. In the middle of the night, he would wake up and make some noise. He would sing very loud. He would break glasses. For what reason? He would accidentally see the two lovebirds making love like newly-weds. It was such a horrible scene for an innocent boy to witness.

What happened next was the boy got kicked out from the school for squeezing a female classmate's breast.

When his grandfather was confined in a hospital located in the *poblacion*, his parents went there to take care of him. The boy was left all by himself in the barrio.

His grandfather died in February 2003 and the wake was held at the house of an uncle, almost a kilometer away from the boy's home. One hot afternoon, he was seen carrying half a sack of rice which he planned to sell in the market. He was surprised that so many were at his uncle's house. When he went inside the house, the people started laughing at the puzzled expression on his face. Stupid people!

There were no tears, but he had changed. He talked sparingly. In the wee hours of morning, he would clap his hands, sing and dance.

After 45 days of observing his crazy antics, his mother had enough of him. She ran away together with her partner. He had warned her that he would leave her if she took the boy along.

Abandoned by his own mother, the son felt even more disoriented. He was devastated.

Now you can find the boy going around some of the malls in our town. He finds happiness in the mall, in the market, in the streets where people can kick him, spit on him, punch him, stone him whenever they please.

It's hard to say and sad to accept, but that crazy kid is my cousin. We would lock him inside a room in our house, but somehow he would always manage to escape.

I didn't write this to bring his plight to the attention of his mother. What is the Filipino saying? "*Walang ina na makakatiis sa anak.*" Well I feel blessed because she is not my mother.

Mellany Malotoc, 23, works in a fast-food chain as part of the service crew.

LETTERS

Spurious letter, defiant lawmaker

JOFELLE Tesorio's article last Nov. 29, titled "Conflict in Palawan Council—2 execs wrestle for environment post," was unfair to me and misled your readers, especially the Palaweños.

First of all, the supposed endorsement made by President Macapagal-Arroyo for the appointment of Nelson Devanadera as executive director was in the form of a photocopy brought by Energy Secretary Vince Perez to the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, which then used it as the basis for declaring the position vacant. The Malacañang Records Office, however, has no copy of this supposed "letter of desire" of the President.

Second, Tesorio quoted Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra as saying that "the choice of executive director rests on the President." What she didn't mention was that although the PCSD is under the Office of the President, its 97 staff members, including the executive director, are protected by Civil Service Rules, as set forth in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 7611, which created the PCSD. Basically that means that no officer or employee can be removed except for cause.

On Nov. 9, 2004, the Court of Appeals' 13th Division promulgated a resolution restraining the Council from implementing the resolution declaring the position of the executive director vacant. The order was served on Nov. 15 and 16 by a court official.

The order clearly means that I have the lawful mandate to function as executive director. However, when I reported for work on Nov. 16, Mitra and Devanadera refused to honor the court order. Mitra himself directed the staff to get their instructions only from Devanadera.

Finally, it is not true that I held office at the opposite side of the street as Tesorio reported. Surely she knows I couldn't have done that since there's nothing there but a vacant lot.

—WINSTON G. ARZAGA, CSEE,
executive director,
Palawan Council for Sustainable Development,
Sta. Monica Heights, Puerto Princesa City

Disappointed with SC ruling on Mining Act

THE NATIONAL Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the largest group of mainstream Protestants and non-Roman Catholic Churches, is greatly dismayed at the Supreme Court decision reversing its earlier ruling on the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

We are concerned that with this turnaround, the Supreme Court has finally succumbed to the pressures of President Macapagal-Arroyo and foreign business interests at the expense of our people.

This is a dangerous development that could lead to greater and far-reaching disasters. The miserable condition of indigenous peoples and communities gravely affected by the destructive open-pit mining and logging operations is a living testament to the follies of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

The NCCP affirms its stand against the liberalization of the country's mining industry by calling for the scrapping of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995. The Mining Act "has allowed the intensified extraction of our mineral resources endowed by the Almighty Creator" and "violates the patrimony and sovereignty of the country with the expropriation of the people's land for foreign mining corporations and the 100% control of equity." (Resolution on the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, NCCP Executive Committee, Nov. 4, 1996)

More than ever, the NCCP calls on its member churches and the general public to be vigilant in pushing for the rejection of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995. We also call on our lawmakers to repeal this destructive law, uphold the country's sovereignty and protect our national patrimony and avert the devastation of our God-given lands and environment.

Let us support initiatives that will ensure a mining policy that is pro-people, protects the environment and pushes for the country's genuine development. We owe this to our children.

—SHARON ROSE JOY RUIZ-DUREMDES,
general secretary,
National Council of Churches
in the Philippines,
nccp-ga@philonline.com

GMA trying to be funny?

"NPA blamed for landslides."

Was the President trying to be funny? Or has jet lag finally gotten to her? It is well-known that illegal logging began during the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos. It was the payola to buy the military's loyalty and perpetuate him in power. It is still the payola to keep some of the brass from misbehaving. Now it is also a way of repaying political favors.

Blame it on the New People's Army? Why not blame it on Santa Claus and his elves? Logging entails too much work. Like many "law enforcers" the NPA prefers the easy way, like "people's taxes," i.e., "*kotong*."

What adds insult to injury is the lack of respect the President has for the people's intelligence. Illegal logging has been cast on the limelight only because of the catastrophe it has caused. It has been going on for almost one generation. How many more people must die before decisive action is taken?

—ED LOPEZ,
Ciudad Grande,
Bakakeng, Baguio City

GSIS probe of spurious loan has already begun

REGARDING the INQUIRER news story, "Teachers hit anomalies in GSIS loans" (PDI, 11/28/04), please be informed that GSIS president Winston Garcia has already ordered an investigation into the complaint of Dr. Mercedes Reyes. Rest assured that the Government Service Insurance System will act accordingly once it verifies the alleged spurious housing loan made in her name without her knowledge and authority.

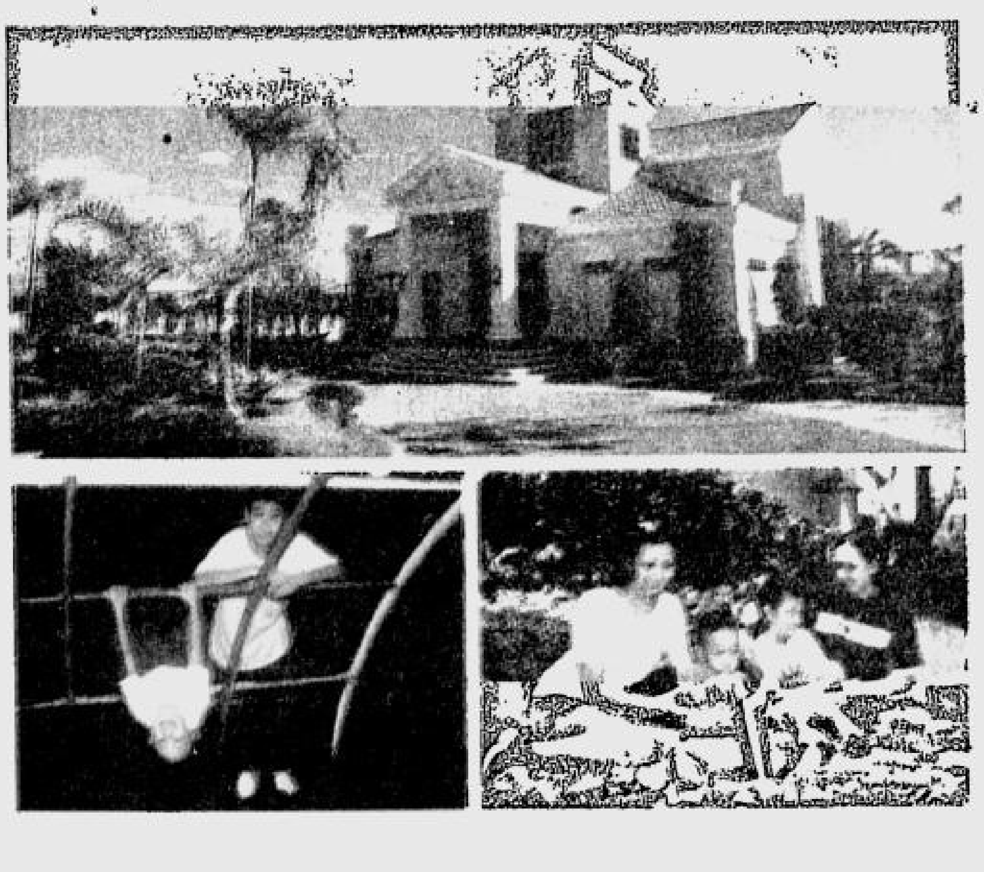
It is precisely to prevent such anomalies that Garcia introduced reforms in the GSIS, including the full updating of the records of all GSIS members and contributing agencies through total computerization. It is unfortunate that instead of being praised for his efforts, Garcia has been subjected to unfair criticisms and malicious attacks by individuals acting in their self-interest.

Nevertheless, Garcia will continue to pursue the reforms in the GSIS to protect its members from being victimized by impostors and racketeers in or outside the GSIS. It appears that Reyes was victimized by loan racketeers long before Garcia took over the helm of the GSIS in 2001. With the reforms he has introduced, this would no longer happen, especially since the members' list has been fully updated and purged of fake members. As a result, the number of bona fide GSIS members has been reduced from 2.7 million to 1.3 million.

The records of contributing agencies have also been updated: government agencies are now required to pay their contributions for their employees' benefits in full, unlike before when many were remiss in their remittances, endangering the financial viability of the system.

Garcia is grateful to the media for bringing to his attention cases involving GSIS members such as Reyes' problem.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president,
Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City



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Higher toll at Nlex put on hold for the holidays

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Motorists and commuters using the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) will enjoy a brief breather from paying higher toll during the Christmas holidays or until early January.

The good news came after officials of the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) confirmed to the Pampanga provincial board on Thursday that the NLEX developer, the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC), has yet to apply for a permit to be allowed to charge the new rates.

MNTC president Jose de Jesus, interviewed by the INQUIRER on Friday, confirmed the delay in the implementation of the adjusted rates.

"Not yet," he said when asked if the MNTC was proceeding with its Dec. 15 schedule of charging new rates.

The MNTC, De Jesus said, has just applied for a certificate of substantial completion. Its approval will be the basis to seek the nod of the TRB on the new fees.

New schedule

The process may take a while but De Jesus said he expected that the MNTC could start collecting the new toll by late December or early January.

De Jesus said his company would base the adjustment on the formula approved in the project's Supplemental Toll Operation Agreement (Stoa) with the government, the NLEX operator Philippine National Construction Corp. and the MNTC.

The base toll rates were based on construction and pre-operating costs, operations and maintenance costs, agreed traffic assumption, adjustment factors (inflation, foreign exchange rates) and return on investments).

Remedial works in some portions of the new highway had delayed the MNTC's application for a completion certificate.

"The contractor (Leighton) wants the works to be within its standards," De Jesus said, adding that the costs were on Leighton's expense.

TRB officials said the project, worth P18.3 billion, was 95 percent done.

The public, however, should brace for additional toll increases. The difference, De Jesus said, would be "a few centavos higher" than previously announced rates.

The opening rates at the 84-km restored highway were initially set at P2.49 per km for cars, P6.23 for buses and light trucks, and P7.47 for heavy vehicles.

Other side

The business sector in Pampanga sought staggered increases to be able to absorb them while militant groups pressed for lower rates.

Also in Thursday's hearing, Pampanga Board Member Tarcicio Halili questioned why the PNCC had allowed the MNTC to take over the NLEX when its franchise was ending in 2007.

Julius Corpus, TRB consultant, did not comment on the takeover but said the contract issue was best left to Congress to resolve.

Halili said the PNCC got the franchise to operate the NLEX starting in the 1970s through Presidential Decrees 1112 and 1113 issued by the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

"Only Congress then can change the terms of the franchise contract," he said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Suspected illegally-cut logs seized in Cebu, Cavite towns

AUTHORITIES appear to have stepped up the hunt for illegally-cut logs following the disaster in Quezon and Aurora provinces that has been blamed on deforestation and logging.

Police, environment and local officials announced that they had stopped the transportation of logs loaded in 16 trucks in separate operations—one in two towns in Cebu and another in a town in Cavite.

In Cebu, officials said they stopped 12 trucks from transporting what they suspect was illegal lumber in the towns of Alcoy and Daanbantayan in Cebu province.

At the Alcoy operation, officials said seven trucks were stopped in Barangay Nug-as about 92.8 km south of Cebu City. The village is a forested area.

The following day, police and local officials stopped five trucks loaded with timber in Daanbantayan, 128 km north of Cebu City.

Alcoy Mayor Antonio Plando said a forester of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) went to his office and reported the alleged illegal cutting of trees inside a 1,000-hectare timberland in Barangay Nug-as, about 13 km from the town proper.

He said he and some policemen went to the area and found seven trucks loaded with assorted timber—mahogany, gemelina and kangingag—measuring 5,792 board feet.

Plando ordered the police to seize all the items and bring these to the municipal hall.

PO3 Edwin Miranda of the Alcoy police said on Wednesday, three personnel from the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in the nearby town of Argao tried to claim the assorted timber and lumber.

SEN. RAMON Revilla Jr. gets a personal feel of the disaster that struck Real town in Quezon as he aids dzMM reporter Jun Lincoran (second from left) who was injured when a boulder falling from the mountain struck him.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miranda said the Cenro-Argao personnel presented a sanitation cutting permit signed by DENR-Central Visayas executive regional director Clarence Baguilad and issued to the Manguerra Mining and Development Corp.

The police refused to release the lumber and timber upon the mayor's instructions.

The sanitation cutting permit requires supervision by a DENR forester.

Plando said he wanted to make sure the trees from where the timber was cut were inside the area covered by the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) issued to Manguerra.

Plando said the area is surrounded by tree plantations being maintained by cooperatives.

He said, however, that Manguerra was allowed to cut trees starting Nov. 22 while markings on the confiscated timber showed they were cut prior to that.

Loreto Rivac, Argao head forester, visited Plando and clarified that his men just wanted to check the items and not to lobby for their release.

In Daanbantayan, five trucks were stopped from transporting logs from Barangay Bagay.

A report from village officials prompted the operation.

Romeo Canillas, Menro officer, quoted Cindy Ponpon, the timber buyers, as saying the wood was for delivery to Mandaue City. She failed to show permits for their transport, however.

In Cavite, police stopped four 10-wheel trucks with about 5,000 cubic meters of mature logs at a checkpoint in Barangay Poblacion in Tanza town on Wednesday.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police chief, said members of the police mobile unit stopped the trucks just in front of the Tanza municipal hall.

He quoted the drivers of the trucks as saying the 24 round logs were imported from the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and were covered with permits from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Rosales said the logs were owned by Advance Global Transportation Systems.

He said police impounded the logs but were turned over to the community environment officer of Trece Martirez City upon instructions from Environment Secretary Michael Defensor.

"They said they inspect the logs to check if it were really imported," he told the INQUIRER.

Rosales quoted the drivers as saying the logs were loaded at a port in Ibaan, Batangas and was for delivery to the Export Processing Zone in Rosario, Cavite.

He said the logs were consigned to Wukong PTE Unlimited, which manufactures pre-fabricated wood products for houses. He said the company exports the products to Japan.

Although there is no known illegal logging operations in the province, Rosales said police have stepped up operations against small-scale logging in Cavite.

He said they seized 300 board feet of acacia wood abandoned in a forested area in Barangay Talispungo in Maragondon town on Monday.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, Calabarzon police chief, ordered a detailed inspection of the Batangas port where the logs were reportedly picked up.

In an earlier interview, Senior Supt. Don Montenegro, Batangas police chief, said he knew logs were regularly being delivered to several ports in the province but these were legal.

He said since January, police have arrested 35 people who were caught transporting illegally cut logs mostly coming from the Mindoro islands.

He said some 10,000 board feet of hardwood was seized.

"Most of the illegal logs were brought here by small motor boats from Mindoro," he said.

He said most of the imported logs that police confiscated came from Malaysia and Indonesia. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Funds for reforestation untapped in Negros

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Not one of the 25 cities and municipalities in Negros Oriental has availed themselves of funding offered by the provincial government for reforestation.

Gov. George Arnaiz, who made the offer early this year, said his office has committed some P12.5 million for reforestation projects for all the cities and towns in the province.

Although some were "interested," no local government unit (LGU) has so far formally taken the offer.

Each LGU that will implement the project gets P500,000 in funding but it must put up a 50 percent counterpart fund or P250,000.

The governor reiterated his offer and said that if the LGUs do not have money to put up the counterpart fund, they can tap the private sector for help.

The governor wants the project to also provide livelihood to people living in the mountains, as they will be hired in the replanting of trees.

He also said a major component of the project is agroforestry, which includes the planting of cash crops and fruit trees that can be harvested in a short period of time.

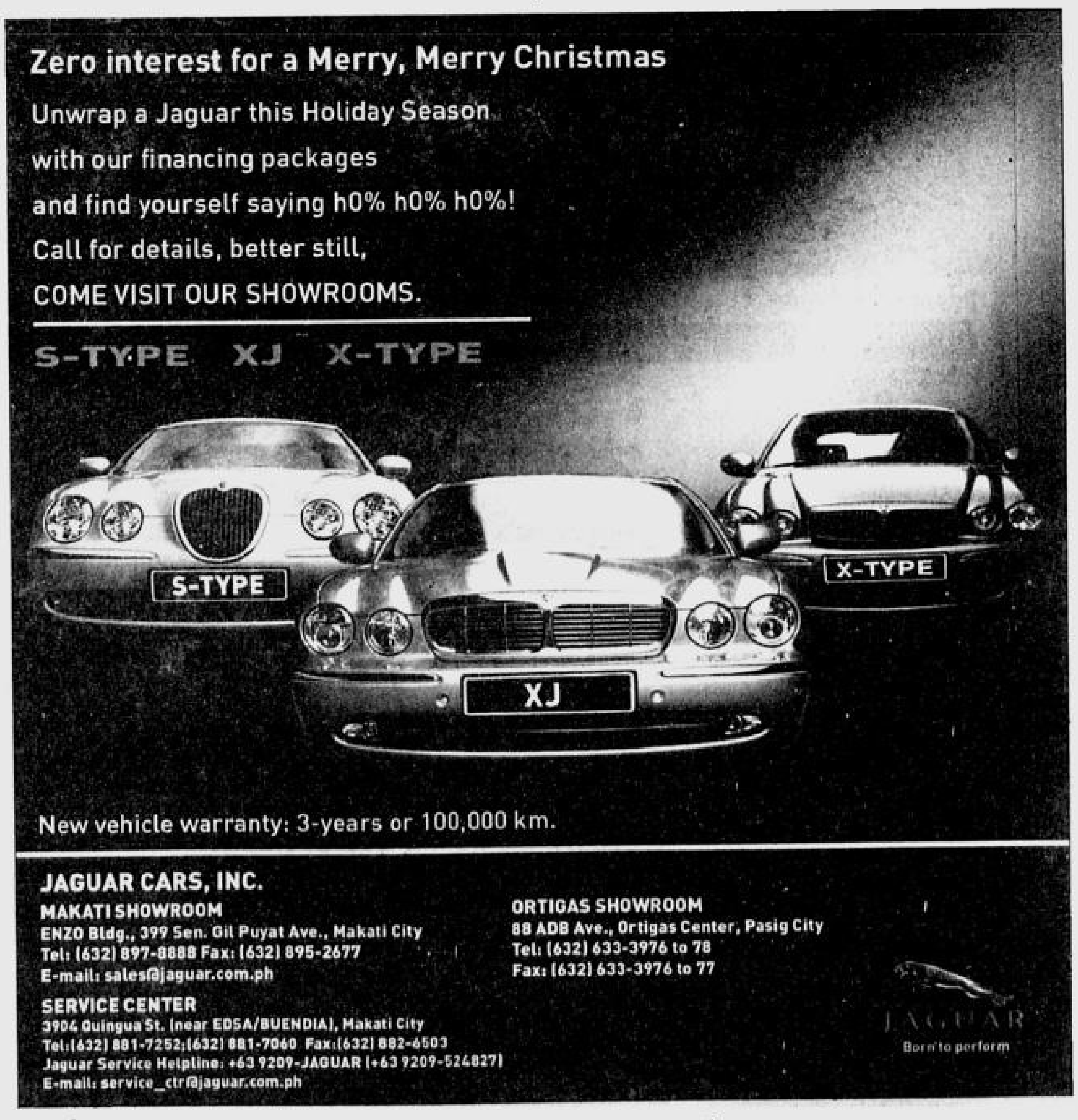
Arnaiz stressed that the flashfloods that killed hundreds of people in Luzon must serve as a lesson on the need to protect and preserve the environment.

Aside from reforestation, he said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) should prosecute suspected illegal loggers, including the "kaingineros (slash and burn farmers)."

"I told the DENR people to file cases against anybody who was caught violating forestry laws," Arnaiz said.

Charlie Fabre, community environment and natural resources officer (Cenro), said his office has been filing cases against those involved in the illegal logging activities.

But Fabre, a veteran forester, said the mere filing of cases, even if they result in convictions, is not the only way to stop illegal logging.



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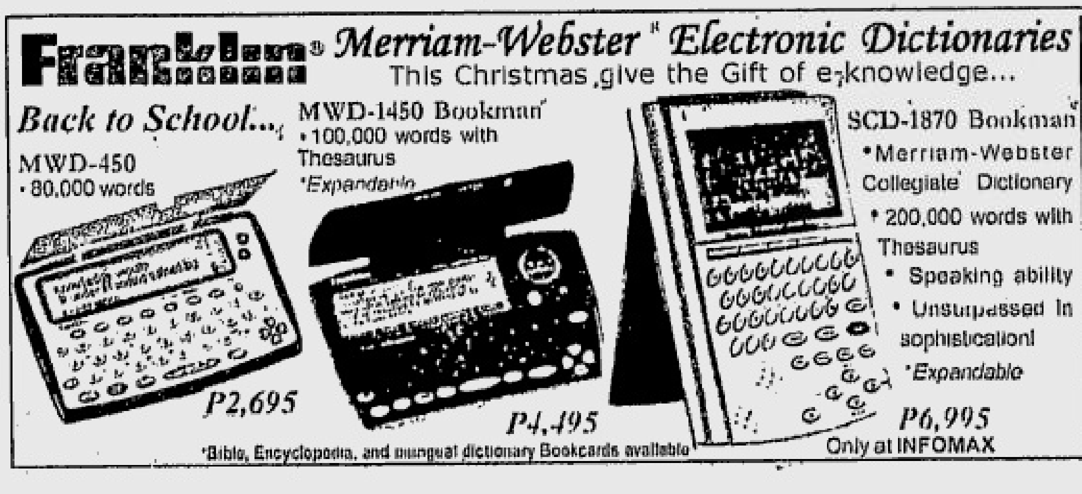

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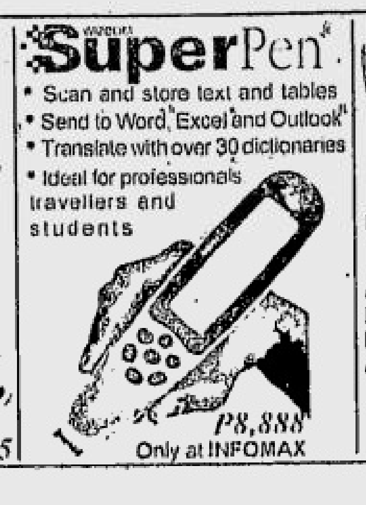

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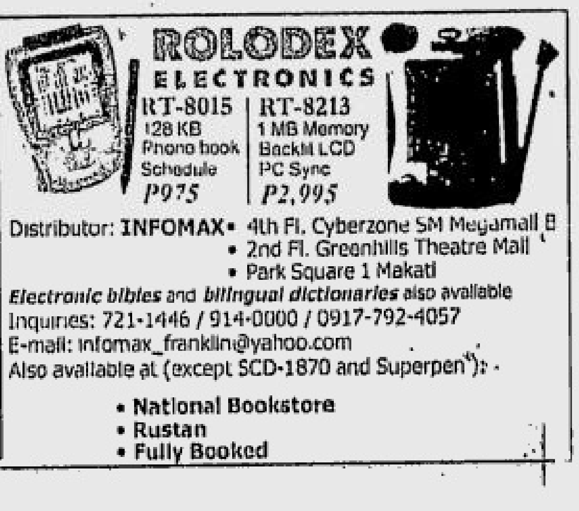

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SR 1.8 GAS A/T	896,000	100,000	67,342	46,416	36,782	26,500	21,622	18,335	17,196
GSX 2.0 GAS A/T	847,000	100,000	62,921	43,370	34,371	24,763	20,205	17,131	16,067
GLX 1.8 GAS A/T	807,000	90,000	60,215	41,505	32,895	23,699	19,337	16,395	15,376
GL 1.8 GAS M/T	698,000	80,000	51,500	35,349	28,023	20,189	16,473	13,963	13,096
DLX 2.4 DSL M/T	690,000	80,000	53,242	36,698	29,063	20,938	17,084	14,496	13,596
DLX 1.8 GAS M/T (12.07%)	663,000	80,000	48,583	33,173	26,301	18,948	15,460	13,103	12,290
DLX 1.8 GAS M/T (50%)	663,000	331,500	27,625	18,417	13,856	9,890	8,037	6,776	6,336

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VARIANT	SRP	LOW DP	12	18	24	36	48	60	72
4X4 A/T	1,268,000	100,000	104,473	72,011	57,281	41,065	33,506	28,444	26,678
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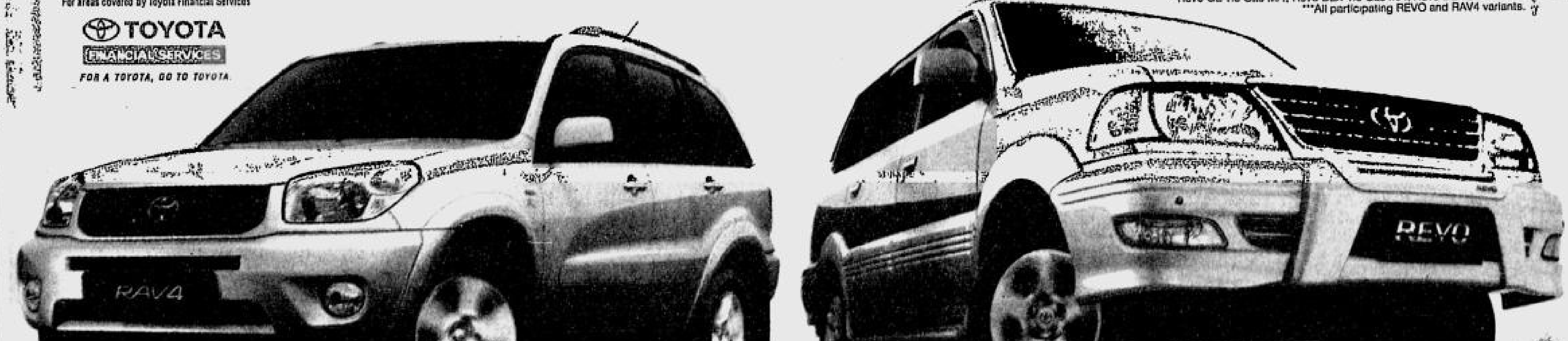

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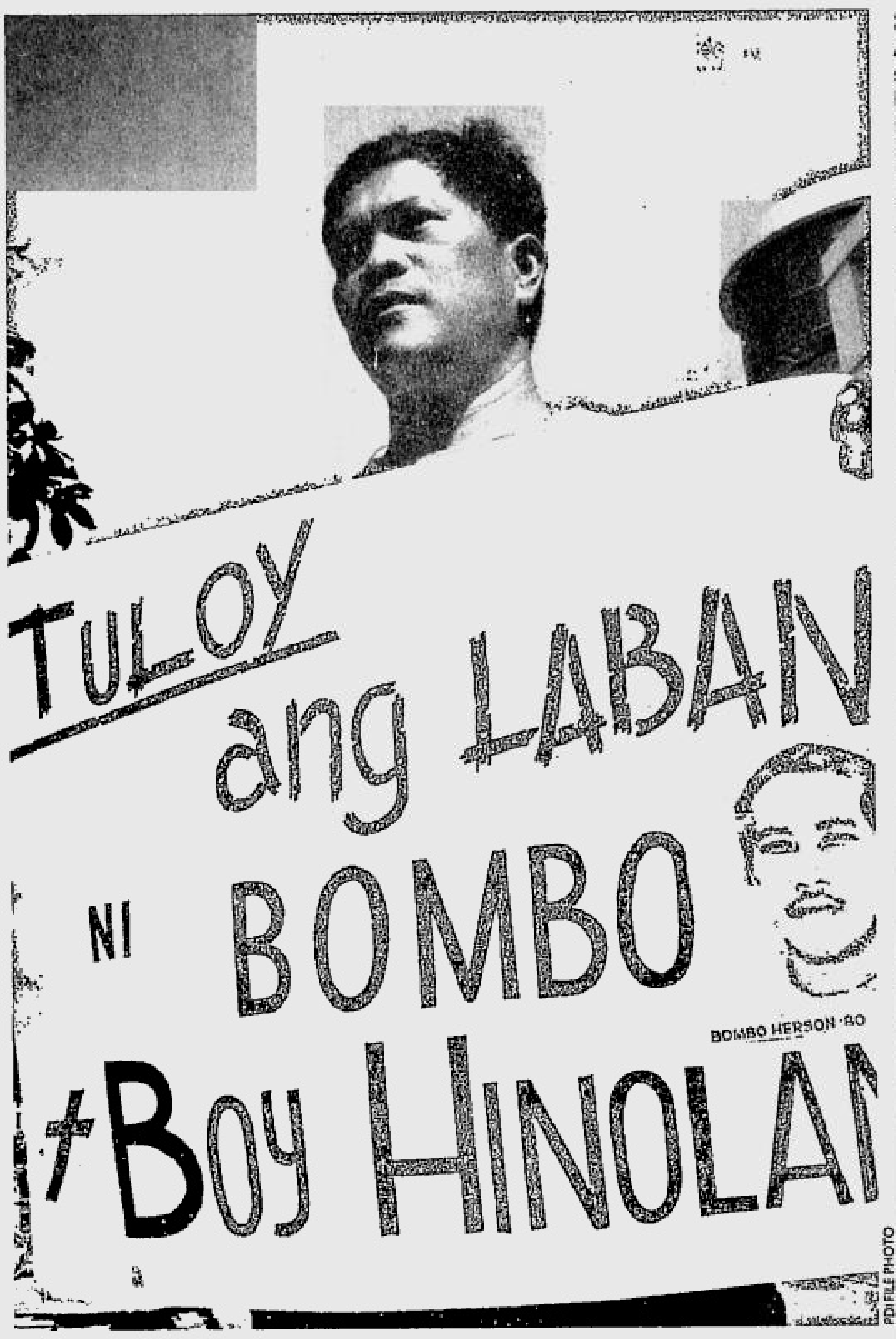


PDI FILE PHOTO

SYMPATHY A protester declares sympathy for slain broadcaster Hinolan in Davao City, kilometers away from Roxas City where the newsman was killed and buried on Nov. 27.

Goodbye, 'Bombo Boy'

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Roxas City

"GOODBYE, Boy. You have left us forever," an old woman cried as she hugged the casket of slain broadcaster Herson Hinolan.

A few meters away, Hinolan's widow Aphrodite and their 10-year-old son Kim sought solace in each other's arms as the casket was lowered into the grave.

Hinolan's burial on Nov. 27 was witnessed by around 2,000 mourners calling for justice and condemning his murder. They were driven to tears during the necrological service earlier when a recording of one of his programs was aired for the last time, his booming voice echoing inside the Mary Immaculate Metropolitan Cathedral.

Many more people lined up the streets of Roxas City, capital of Capiz, as the kilometer-long funeral cortege headed for the Divine Jesus Memorial Park in Barangay Banica. At the cemetery, the mourners lined up for a last glimpse of his remains.

His burial was a fitting sendoff to one of the few broadcasters who rose from the ranks after covering four provinces in Western Visayas.

Hinolan started as a reporter of Bombo Radyo in Bacolod City, covering the military beat in 1988 at the height of the government's counter-insurgency campaign on Negros Island. He practically encamped at the headquarters of the Army's Negros Island Command, said Jenil Demorito, Bombo Radyo Network's Visayas area manager for AM stations.

He was assigned to Bombo Radyo Roxas in 1993 as host of the "Bombohanay sa Udto" and later became the station's assistant manager. It was during his stint in Roxas that he met and fell in love with Aphrodite Vidal.

Hinolan's feisty style in his program drew libel suits and threats. He took all these in stride but took no chances and packed an M-16 rifle, said Demorito.

In 1998, he transferred to Iloilo City as station manager of the Radyo Mindanao Network station.

'My go-to guy'

He went back to Bombo Radyo a year after and became the station manager of dyIN Bombo Radyo Kalibo where he hosted the morning program "Bombohanay Bigtime."

Demorito described Hinolan as a "fighter" and "good soldier" who never refused even the most challenging assignments. "He was my go-to-guy. Once (the assignment) is given to him, I can be assured that it is good as accomplished."

Police said it was probably Hinolan's hard-hitting ("*sagad sa buto*") commentaries that earned the ire of groups or individuals who wanted him silenced.

On Nov. 13, a lone gunman repeatedly shot the 38-year-old broadcaster outside a carnival in Kalibo. He died two days later from serious injuries that damaged his stomach and liver.

The gunman apparently made sure Hinolan was dead. He shot him at least four times and pursued him until the wounded broadcaster fell on the road.

Hinolan's mother Sonia called on the police and other law enforcement agencies to hasten the investigation of the murder and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

She urged the public to help solve the murder of other journalists whose cases had remained unsolved. "Help in whatever you can or these killings will continue," she said.

Police tagged Mayor Fred Arsenio of Lezo, Aklan, as the gunman. Arsenio, a retired soldier, has denied involvement in the crime.

At least one other suspect remains at large.

The case against Arsenio is undergoing preliminary investigation at the provincial prosecutor's office.

Hinolan was the 10th journalist killed in the country this year and the 59th since 1986 when democracy was restored.

Journalists in Panay, who have been actively condemning previous killings of journalists from other regions, found themselves mourning and calling for justice for one of their own.

Unprecedented unity

Hinolan's death brought an unprecedented sense of unity to the often fractious media community in Iloilo, according to veteran journalists.

Setting aside professional differences, around 100 journalists joined Hinolan's funeral cortege from Zarraga town in Iloilo when his remains were taken from Aklan to his hometown in Talisay City in Negros Occidental.

"He is not a competitor anymore. He is (a) brother in the profession, a fallen comrade," said John Paul Tia, station manager of Bombo Radyo's rival Aksyon Radyo Iloilo.

Many of the journalists, led by the Iloilo chapter of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), wore black shirts emblazoned with "Stop Killing Journalists!" and black armbands.

Fifteen vehicles joined the convoy that took off around 1 p.m. at the Zarraga public plaza. The number had doubled when it arrived in Iloilo City an hour later.

People who waited for hours in Zarraga threw flowers at the funeral car as it reached the plaza. They approached Hinolan's family, who were in a van, to offer condolences.

Some people held lighted candles and placards with handwritten messages calling for justice for the slain journalists and urging media practitioners to carry on with their work.

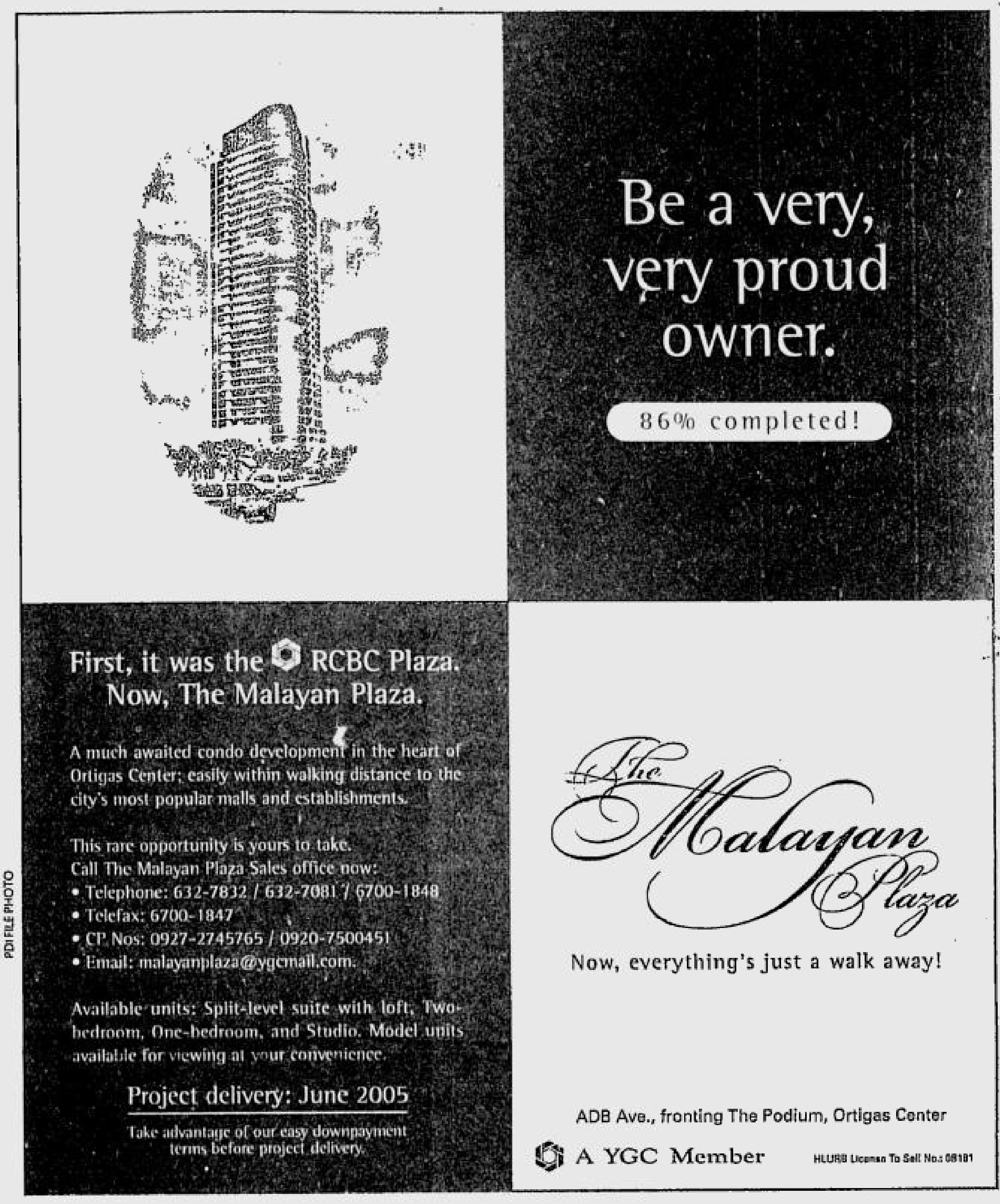
Radio stations airing the event live received phone calls and text messages from listeners offering sympathy and lauding the work of journalists.

At Barangay Lapuz in La Paz District, where Hinolan's remains were unloaded from a roll-on, roll-off (Roro) craft, militant groups led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan held placards calling for justice for all slain journalists.

Media organizations have called on law enforcers and the government to show proof that they were serious in solving the cases and preventing future ones. "Solve the cases or else suffer the people's wrath," said Demorito during a necrological service in Iloilo City.

"Boy's killers were sending us a message of fear. We have only two options: To be afraid or to go on with the fight," said Tia.

Tia said Hinolan's murder left a reminder to his colleagues. "We realize that we are loved by the people and in our unity, we can confront the most difficult of challenges, even death."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PINKO

8 cultists plead not guilty to gun charges

LAPULAPU CITY, Cebu—Eight cult members pleaded innocent of charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives yesterday, days after they were arrested carrying unlicensed assault rifles and grenades.

Eight members of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) headed by Ruben Ecleo Jr. were arraigned on the charges at the Municipal Trial Court in Cities here.

They also asked the court to reduce the recommended bail bond of P360,000 for each by at least half, saying they could not afford to pay the amount.

The eight were Nestor Carrol, M/Sgt. Heracleo Rallestan, Michael Baylon, Richard Caballero, Arjulyn Gallardo, Rosalito Oaper, Damiano and Elpidio Amarila.

They were on board a van when arrested in the evening of Dec. 3 at a police checkpoint in Sitio Buaya, Barangay Mactan this city.

Seized from them were .32 cal. revolver, .45 cal. pistols, three baby Armalites with a silencer, six rifle grenades, two grenades and 1,000 bullets.

The Lapulapu City prosecutor recommended bail of P360,000 for each of the accused or P60,000 for low caliber firearms; P100,000 for the explosives and P200,000 for the high-powered firearms.

MTCC Judge Ester Veloso gave the public prosecutor three days to comment on the motion to reduce bail filed by the accused before she rules on it.

After the accused entered their plea of not guilty, the judge deferred the pre-trial conference of the case after their lawyer Linda Susan Baring told the court that she was withdrawing as their counsel.

The judge said she would not allow Baring to withdraw from the case until the accused could get another lawyer to defend them.

Baring later told the INQUIRER that the eight hired her just to appeal for a reduction of bail and to represent them during the arraignment.

"It's the constitutional right of the accused to ask for a reduction of bail. As to my withdrawal, I only represented them in their request to reduce the bail bond recommended and for their arraignment. I still do not know who would replace me," she said.

Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau

3 Cavite cops slain in ambush

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Three members of a special unit of the Cavite police were killed in an ambush in a village in Silang Cavite Thursday.

The slain policemen were identified as Roilan del Mundo, Teodorico Dino and George Suarez, all police officers 1 and members of the Special Weapons and Tactics team of the Dasmariñas police station.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police chief, said a man identifying himself as Jude Rivera called up the police station at around noon to inform police about the supposed discovery of bombs in Silang.

He said the town police chief instructed the victims to check the veracity of the report and sent Del Mundo, Dino and Suarez because they were experts in handling explosives.

About two hours after, at around 2 p.m., the local police of Silang received a call from the barangay councilor of Sitio Ilang Ilang relaying information that the policemen were gunned down in the area by unidentified armed men.

Rosales said they have yet to determine whether the communist New People's Army (NPA) was behind the killings.

"There were no reported sightings of NPAs in the area. The NPAs are considered weak here and have no known base in Cavite. But it (the ambush) was well-planned," he told the INQUIRER.

He said another sign that makes him doubt that the NPA was behind the ambush was the failure of the attackers to take the policemen's service firearms, a usual practice of communist rebels which they call "agaw armas."

He said police were able to recover all of the victims' guns except for a hand pistol and an M-16 rifle.

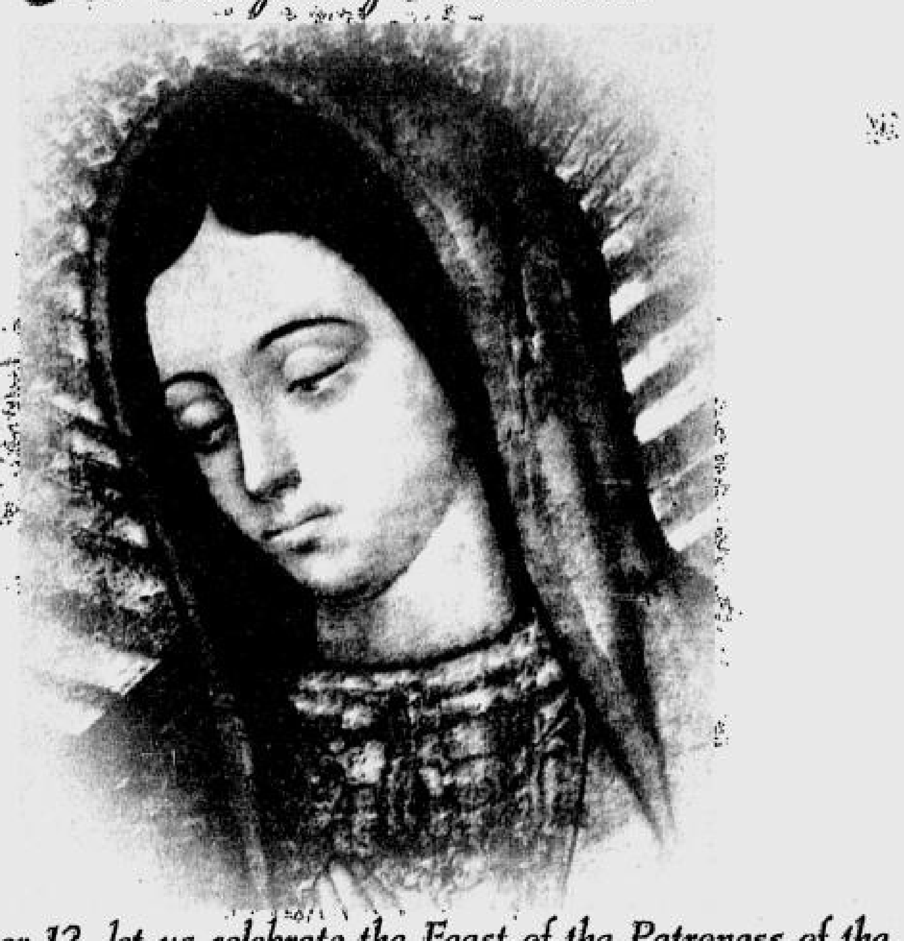
Rosales said they are looking into personal vendetta as a possible motive for the killings.

"The three might have gotten the ire of some unscrupulous individuals while they were performing their duties as policemen," he said.

He said he already instructed his men to take all emergency calls with caution and always monitor all mobile units assigned to areas in the province where ambushes could be planned.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

An Obligatory Memorial



On December 12, let us celebrate the Feast of the Patroness of the Philippines, Our Lady of Guadalupe, with an Obligatory Memorial.

Pope Pius XI, of holy memory, in his Bull on July 16, 1935, entitled: "In Perpetual Remembrance" says "we should consider it proper to proclaim the Most Blessed Virgin Mary to be the Heavenly Patroness of these Islands under the title of Guadalupe..." And he continues to say, "Wherefore we command that all the Liturgical Rights and Privileges which are proper to such a Patronage shall be bestowed upon Her Heavenly Patronage."

And, in order to apply the full force of this Bull, the Pope then ends by saying, "These things we define and promulgate and we decree that these LETTERS SHALL FORTHWITH STAND IRREVOCABLE, VALID AND EFFECTIVE, and shall remain their full and complete effects; and they shall benefit with all of the Islands both now and forever; and IF ANYTHING CONTRARY TO THESE THINGS SHOULD HAPPEN TO BE ATTEMPTED BY ANYBODY EITHER KNOWINGLY OR UNKNOWINGLY NO MATTER BY WHAT AUTHORITY, it must be judged and dealt with accordingly, AND IT SHALL BECOME NULL AND VOID FROM THIS MOMENT. Everything to the contrary notwithstanding."

In obedience thereto, a Solemn Mass will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m. at the Oratory of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12, at the Lay Monastic Community of Caryana in Magalang, Pampanga.

An Appeal to the President

In her recent trip to Mexico, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared December 12 to be a special day of prayer. In line with this, may we therefore make an appeal to the President to declare December 12, the Feast of the Patroness of the Philippines, a National Holiday for all Filipinos.

Philippine Pediatric Society, Inc.
In the Service of Filipino Child

INFORMATION BULLETIN ON MENINGOCOCCEMIA

What is Meningococcemia?

Meningococcemia is a disease caused by the spread of the bacteria Neisseria meningitides through the bloodstream, causing severe signs and symptoms. The most deadly form of meningococcal infection is fulminant meningococcemia, which consists of fever, rash, and low blood pressure, leading to death.

What are the signs and symptoms of Meningococcemia?

The signs and symptoms are rapidly progressive, includes fever, chills, body weakness, cough, and sore throat. There is also a rash which may start as pinpoint reddish lesions on the legs and arms, later becoming larger and appearing like bruises. The patient may or may not have signs of meningitis such as stiff neck, convulsion, delirium, and vomiting.

How does meningococcal disease spread? How soon after exposure to the bacteria does one develop the signs and symptoms?

Although meningococcal bacteria are common, they do not survive for long periods outside the body. The bacteria spreads by droplet infection, direct contact with secretions from the nose and throat of an infected person, through close physical contact like coughing, sneezing, kissing, and sharing anything that has been inside an infected person's mouth (such as toothbrushes, cups, utensils, and drinking straws).

It takes between 1-10 days (usually less than 4 days) from exposure to development of the signs and symptoms.

Who is considered a close contact?

A close contact is someone who has had direct contact with saliva or secretions from the nose or throat of an infected person. These include household members or those who share a bed, those who share eating and drinking utensils, and those who have kissed the infected person. Children in the same childcare center or nursery frequently put objects into their mouths and can be considered close contacts.

What can be done to protect close contacts?

Those who are close contacts of the infected person may continue to attend school or work. However, they should receive antibiotics prescribed by their physician for their own protection.

Can meningococcemia be prevented?

In general, it is wise to avoid using anything that has been in the mouth of another person. Hygiene measures such as handwashing and maintaining a clean, well-ventillated environment, as well as adequate rest and nutrition, will improve resistance.

A vaccine is available which protects against some forms of the bacteria and may thus provide a certain degree of protection. It is usually given to persons who are at high risk of developing the disease. Your doctor should be able to advice you regarding this vaccine.

Can meningococcemia and meningitis be treated?

Early recognition of meningococcal infection and prompt treatment with penicillin G as well as supportive management greatly improves chances of survival.

*This health education campaign is made possible through a grant from Philippine Pediatric Society, Inc. – Council on Child Advocacy and Community Service, Committee on Health Education
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'Sagip Buhay' donations turned over

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer's 19th anniversary celebration on Thursday took a meaningful turn as the donations received by the newspaper for "Operation Sagip Buhay" were turned over to Fr. Francis Lucas of the Prelature of Infanta and Mr. Sanny Jegillos of the Institute for Disaster Risk Management after the anniversary Mass.

Less than a week after the appeal was launched, the newspaper turned over a total of P286,700 to Fr. Lucas and Mr. Jegillos given by individual and corporate donors. Among the corporate donors were San Miguel Corp., Arrow Freight, Asia Brewery and PLDT. This is aside from the donations in kind which had been received by the paper and donations coursed through "Operation Sagip Buhay" partner-organizations. INQUIRER Board Chair Ms Marixi Prieto, PDI President Sandy Romualdez, Publisher Isagani Yambot, INQUIRER Multi-Purpose Cooperative Chair Joel Nigos and LRP Foundation's Tisa Tan were on hand to personally give the donations.

In his response, Fr. Lucas narrated the different stories of the victims and acknowledged the support of the people who had given their time and resources. Aside from this paper, other partner-organizations of "Operation Sagip Buhay" are Assisi Development Foundation, Ayala Foundation, Institute for Disaster Risk Management, Hands On Manila, United Laboratories, Catholic Media Network, Corporate Network for Disaster Response, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc., in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the National Disaster Coordinating Council. As the relief program is moving to the rehabilitation phase, the group is still continuing its appeal for donations for the typhoon victims.

Water shortage looms

From page A1

adequate supplies for now and in the first quarter of 2005 because Angat Dam still had enough water following the heavy rains brought by the cyclones "Unding," "Violeta," "Winnie" and "Yoyong" in November and early this month.

"The problem will come later when the water has been used up," Hondrade said.

Hondrade said the repair of the Umiray facility would take some time, especially since it was inaccessible by land. He said the repair would probably take less than a year but expressed hope the MWSS could finish the job before it was too late.

Weather a factor

"Heavy equipment can only be brought by an airlift, by a special kind of chopper," Hondrade said.

"We are also considering the weather. We can only bring in the equipment if the weather is clear and there are no clouds in the area," Hondrade said.

Hondrade said he had ordered the release of P20 million from MWSS funds to cover the costs of immediate repair of the facility.

Consultants have also been hired to look into how the rehabilitation work could be finished in the soonest possible time, he said.

Help from Malaysia

Appealing to the public to conserve water, Hondrade pointed out that the situation was not yet serious but required attention and the public's cooperation.

He said work to rehabilitate the damage facility might not start immediately because weather in the General Nakar area tended to deteriorate during December.

"We may have to wait until the weather clears up," Hondrade said.

He also said that the MWSS would rent additional helicopters, probably from Malaysia, to airlift the necessary equipment for the repair of the tunnel.

IN THE KNOW

By PDI Research

THE UMIRAY-ANGAT tunnel diverts water from Umiray River in Quezon toward Macua River, a tributary of the Angat River, which in turn flows into the Angat Reservoir in Bulacan, the major source of Metro Manila's water supply.

The tunnel is 13.1 km long and has a diameter of 4.3 meters. It is a major component of the Umiray-Angat Transbasin Project, funded with loans from the Asian Development Bank.

The tunnel is considered an engineering marvel as it was built through the otherwise impenetrable Sierra Madre mountains and excavated through a very wide range of rock conditions.

The demanding engineering work cost P2 billion and took all of three years to complete.

Before the tunnel was built, the Umiray River flowed north, discharging into the Pacific Ocean.

The Umiray basin has a marked rainy season during October to February and a high-flow period from June to February. The catchment of Angat River has its wet season from June to October.

This complementary rainfall pattern of the two watersheds has led to a better Angat reservoir storage and water release facility.

Until the recent typhoons, the Umiray tunnel was supplying Angat Dam with as much as 9 cm (cubic meters per second) of water, benefiting about 2.2 million people in Metro Manila. This means 25 to 30 percent added to the water supply for Metro Manila.

Its beneficiaries have been the residents in the service area of the Manila Water Inc., the Ayala Corp.-led East Zone concessionaire which covers 24 cities and municipalities.

These include Mandaluyong, Marikina, Pasig, Pateros, San Juan, Taguig, Makati, parts of Quezon City and Manila as well as the towns of Angono, Antipolo, Baras, Binangonan, Cainta, Cardona, Jala-Jala, Morong, Pililla, Rodriguez, Tanay, Taytay, Teresa, Rodriguez and San Mateo in the province of Rizal.

SOURCE: ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, MANILA WATER, AND PDI ARCHIVES

THE HOMELESS begin their search for a roof over their heads in Tignoan, Real, Quezon. This father and daughter walk their way toward the next town in search of relief. REM ZAMORA

Miner's nightmare led to miracle rescue in Real

From page A1

small space, about two feet high, where she, her grandmother Maria Tamares and two boys spent 10 days fighting for their lives.

'It was her'

The minute Balungay saw the child's eyes open, he knew it was her.

"I couldn't believe what I saw," he told the INQUIRER as he continued to strike at the concrete with his sledgehammer. "I could feel my bones chill. *Kinilabutan ako talaga,* sir. The child looked like the girl in my dreams. And the elderly woman was her grandmother.

"It was more than a miracle."

The hole was one of four sites that the miners drilled to locate survivors.

Balungay said he was so taken by the sight of the girl emerging from the hole that he didn't realize his tears were rolling down his cheeks.

"I laughed at myself. I thought it was only sweat," he recalled, smiling.

No rookie

He said he was also moved by the cheering of the residents who had been waiting for the bodies of their loved ones to be retrieved.

Balungay, a father of nine, is no rookie in rescue work. He has worked in other disaster-stricken places like Tignoan, and mining had been his family's source of income for more than 20 years.

He said he was part of the rescue team also sent by Philex that rescued Sonia Roco, wife of the former senator and presidential aspirant Raul Roco, from the rubble of the Hyatt Hotel in Baguio.

But the rescue operation in Real is harder compared to the one they had after an earthquake hit Baguio in 1990.

"Digging through the thick mud is more difficult than drilling through concrete. This is too energy-consuming," he said.

Aside from a regular salary of P355 a day, they don't receive any monetary compensation for the operations, Balungay said

Ready to give their all

Engineer Joel Son, team leader of the Philex group, said officers of the Philippine Mine Safety Environment Association, led by Philip Romualdez of Benguet Corp., initiated the move to bring experienced miners to help in the search and rescue operations in the area.

BURIED alive: Volunteer miners carry a body they recovered inside the Repador building that collapsed at the height of "Winnie" along the shore of Barangay Tignoan, Real, Quezon. REM ZAMORA

Son said his team, composed of 10 miners, first met on Saturday to assess the area and the situation based on the information they had.

Their group, together with 10 other miners from Benguet Corp., arrived on Monday noon.

Another group, composed of 20 miners from Lepanto Corp., followed the next day.

Son said his men were eager to join the rescue operation because they were sure that people could still survive under the rubble.

"This is a mercy mission. Everyone of us knows that so many lives depend on us. We are ready to give our all," he said.

Son said they initially had a hard time finding their way to the concrete planks, which was once part of the basement and ground floor of the Repador building, because the ground was covered with mud.

Although three backhoe trucks were sent by the Department of Public Works and Highways, he said they had no other equipment aside from shovels, sledgehammers, solid bars and pinch bars, which they used in digging the area manually.

"We have no machines aside from our tools. The Army later airlifted the acetylene and oxygen tanks here. That made our operation faster," he said.

Veteran rescuer

Vincent Bactadan, head of the Benguet Corp. team, had actually retired from work until he got a call from his former bosses who asked him to lead their group.

He said his work at the Repador was his fourth.

Bactadan, 56, said he was with a team of miners who had drilled and saved survivors from the tragedy that struck Acoje Mining in Sta. Cruz, Zambales, in 1980 and from the Christian College in Cabanatuan City in 1990.

He was also part of the team sent to rescue survivors in the massive flash flood that claimed the lives of thousands of residents in Leyte in December last year.

No let-up

Col. Jaime Buenaflor, chief of the 202nd Infantry Brigade, said search and rescue operations would continue until they were sure that all possible survivors were safe and all the missing had been accounted for.

He said they had requested more equipment to hasten their operations, such as acetylene tanks and machine cutters.

"We want to ensure that the victims will not die just because we failed to reach them in time for them to be recovered," Buenaflor said.

That's why we are asking for more help from companies who can provide us the necessary tools," he said.

Buenaflor said his men and the miners were working more than 12 hours a day to find more survivors.

13.6M affected by 4 typhoons

From page A1

Soliman announced.

The clothes—about 10,000 bales of them—will actually come from the stockpile of smuggled goods confiscated by the BOC, Soliman said in a press conference.

Damaged homes total 42,711, of which 15,529 were destroyed beyond simple repairs, Soliman said.

No donor fatigue?

The grim statistics continued to draw a matching response from Good Samaritans—both relief donors and volunteers—who, Soliman said, were far from showing "fatigue."

But she admitted that there were already signs of "tapering off" in the amount of donations at the DSWD's main drop-off center in Metro Manila, or Warehouse 9 in Camp Aquinaldo.

The warehouse is also used by Operation Sagip Buhay, a multi-sectoral mission that includes the INQUIRER.

Soliman noted that since the warehouse began receiving donations after "Winnie," the incoming goods were worth between P1 million and P1.2 million on a daily basis.

"But yesterday, it was down to P900,000," she said.

Money in bank

Apparently to dispel doubts about the government's ability to sustain relief efforts, Soliman said the National Disaster Coordinating Council still had "cash in bank" amounting to P44 million in foreign donations alone, ready to be used to purchase relief goods.

On top of this amount, international pledges of humanitarian aid are now pegged at P165 million, she reported. This brings the government's reserve funds courtesy of donors to P210 million.

The worth of donated relief goods that have been channeled through the DSWD and other government agencies has reached P36 million, of which P23.78 million has been transported to the disaster areas.

Goods generated by various private sector missions and which were directly brought to the people (without passing through government) have reached P44.2 million, she added.

Foreign donors

China yesterday granted another $200,000 (approximately P11 million) as aid for the typhoon victims.

"The Chinese government and people convey their message of sympathy to the Philippine government and to the victims of typhoons," said Ambassador Wu Hongbo.

China, which was among the first countries to respond to the country's appeal for help, earlier turned over a P2.808-million check to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Japan is also donating an additional $352,188 (approximately P19 million) in emergency assistance.

Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki said the fund would be used to procure food for the 76,000 families in central and southern Luzon.

The grant comes on top of the P15.5 million worth of relief goods that the Japanese government earlier released to the DWSD.

Lack of manpower and meddling by local politicians have caused delays in the relief and recovery operations in Quezon, according to a semi-final report on the after-effects of the four typhoons released by the NDCC.

Meddling politicians

The NDCC report said manpower shortage and lack of transport equipment had slowed down the loading and unloading of relief goods in the Mauban/Dinahican ports.

The "intervention" of a former mayor of Real, who was not identified in the report, had also posed a "problem" in the distribution of relief goods in the isolated Barangays Maragondon, Tignoan, Talisay and Capalong, according to the NDCC.

Communications gap?

The NDCC said a total of 941 persons were confirmed dead, 812 injured and 836 missing from the four cyclones.

But the NDCC noted that other "problems" were causing delays in the relief operations.

It said one problem was brought about by a lack of communication between personel from the DSWD and the Department of Health.

"DSWD personnel are not properly informed by the DOH on the status of victims evacuated to hospitals. Therefore, assistance and information could not be provided relatives of said victims," the NDCC report said.

Drawing from their pork barrel funds and savings from not holding Christmas parties, the Senate has, meanwhile, raised over P8 million as donation to the victims.

Pork barrell funds

The amount included P7.05 million which senators took from their Priority Development Assistance Fund to finance relief operations and reconstruction programs in Aurora and Quezon. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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Las Piñas house yields fake drugs

By Nancy C. Carvajal

DIDN'T feel better after drinking medicine?

Maybe it's time to pay your doctor another visit. Or, you could have been one of those who bought fake medicines that have found their way in some metro drugstores.

Half a million worth of fake medicines were seized from two Pakistani nationals during a raid in a house in Las Piñas, Thursday evening.

"I feel sad for those who were able to buy these fake drugs, thinking they they would get better," said National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Avelino Razon.

Assorted fake drugs were found inside the house of Majeed Mohammad Asif, 37, and Abdul Rehman, 25, at B-823 Tangier St., Tropical Palace BF Homes, Las Piñas City.

Another suspect allegedly involved in the illegal trade, identified as Elizabeth Borcelis, was not around when the raid took place.

The suspects would be charged for violation of Republic Act 8203 or the Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs.

Supt. Danilo Pelisco, head of the NCRPO Intelligence Special Operations Office, said the discovery of the fake merchandise was the result of a sustained surveillance operation.

The raid was covered by a search warrant issued by Judge Elizabeth Yu Guray of the Las Piñas Regional Trial Court.

Last month, the Department of Health announced the creation of government agencies and private sector groups to combat and eliminate the selling of fake medications.

The coalition against fake medicines brings together efforts to curb the illegal trade by the Health, Trade and Justice departments, the Philippine Medical Association, the Drugstores Association of the Philippines, Mercury Drug Corp., Zuellig Pharma Corp., Pfizer, GMA-7 Broadcast Network and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Previous reports revealed that at least 10 percent of the medicine bought in pharmacies nationwide today were found to be fake.

The DOH also warned the public to be vigilant when buying medicines, adding that it was important for consumers to carefully examine the packaging before they make a purchase.

If the prints on the labels are blurred or hazy, and the containers look like they had been tampered with or had been recycled, chances are the products are fake, the health department added.

Extra 'angels' for 'Simbang Gabi'

By Leila B. Salaverria

PEOPLE attending the traditional dawn Masses or "Simbang Gabi" this month would be getting extra protection not only from their guardian angels.

Starting Dec. 16, the Western Police District would be deploying policemen around the city's churches to mingle with the crowd and watch out for snatchers and robbers who might take advantage of the situation, said WPD deputy for administration Sr. Supt. Juanito de Guzman.

"The night shift policemen at the community precincts would be deployed outside, not inside, the churches," he said.

According to De Guzman, the usual threats to churchgoers are snatchers and pickpockets, who would take advantage of the crowded atmosphere to be able to ply their trade without being noticed.

Another danger to early morning or evening Mass participants are robbers who lurk in dark alleys or unlighted streets waiting for potential victims, police said.

Manila is home to several big and well-known churches. The list includes the Quiapo church, the Manila Cathedral, the San Agustin church and the San Sebastian church.

The five police districts in Manila were earlier directed to map out a security plan to ensure the public's safety during the traditional dawn Masses.

Meanwhile, De Guzman said that evening Masses would also be held at the WPD headquarters along United Nations Avenue in Manila.

3 QC teachers cited for outstanding service

By Tina G. Santos

THE QUEZON City government has commended three teachers from the city who were among the winners in this year's Search for Outstanding Teachers, launched by the Metrobank Foundation.

Belmonte led city officials in honoring the awardees, Genersol G. Monton, of Fort Bonifacio High School in Makati and a resident of Batasan Hills; Dr. Antonio Miguel Dans, who teaches at the University of the Philippines in Manila and a resident of New Manila; and Dr. Manuel Dy Jr., a professor from the Ateneo de Manila University.

"The city salutes you for serving as models of excellence, dedication and commitment to the teaching profession. What you have achieve will continue to serve as an inspiration to the teachers of our nation," Belmonte told the awardees.

The search, established in 1985 at the tail-end of the Marcos years, sees to it that teachers are given their due in annual ceremonies. Since 1985, the foundation has recognized 236 outstanding teachers. This year, there were nearly 200 nominees.

The winners were chosen for their outstanding contributions to the teaching profession, personal integrity and character, instructional competence, and professional and community involvement.

One of the awardees, Dans, was a pioneer of evidence-based medicine (EBM) in the country in the mid-'90s, introducing it in the medical curriculum.

As a professor, Dans said he tries to uphold the three pillars of the academe, for which his school is known: research, service and teaching.

"Teaching is a wonderful learning experience," he said. "By becoming a teacher, you make a commitment to become a student all your life. In a way, you are able to stay young for as long as you can," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo conferred the gold medallions to the awardees recently.

The awardees received a trophy and a cash prize of P200,000.

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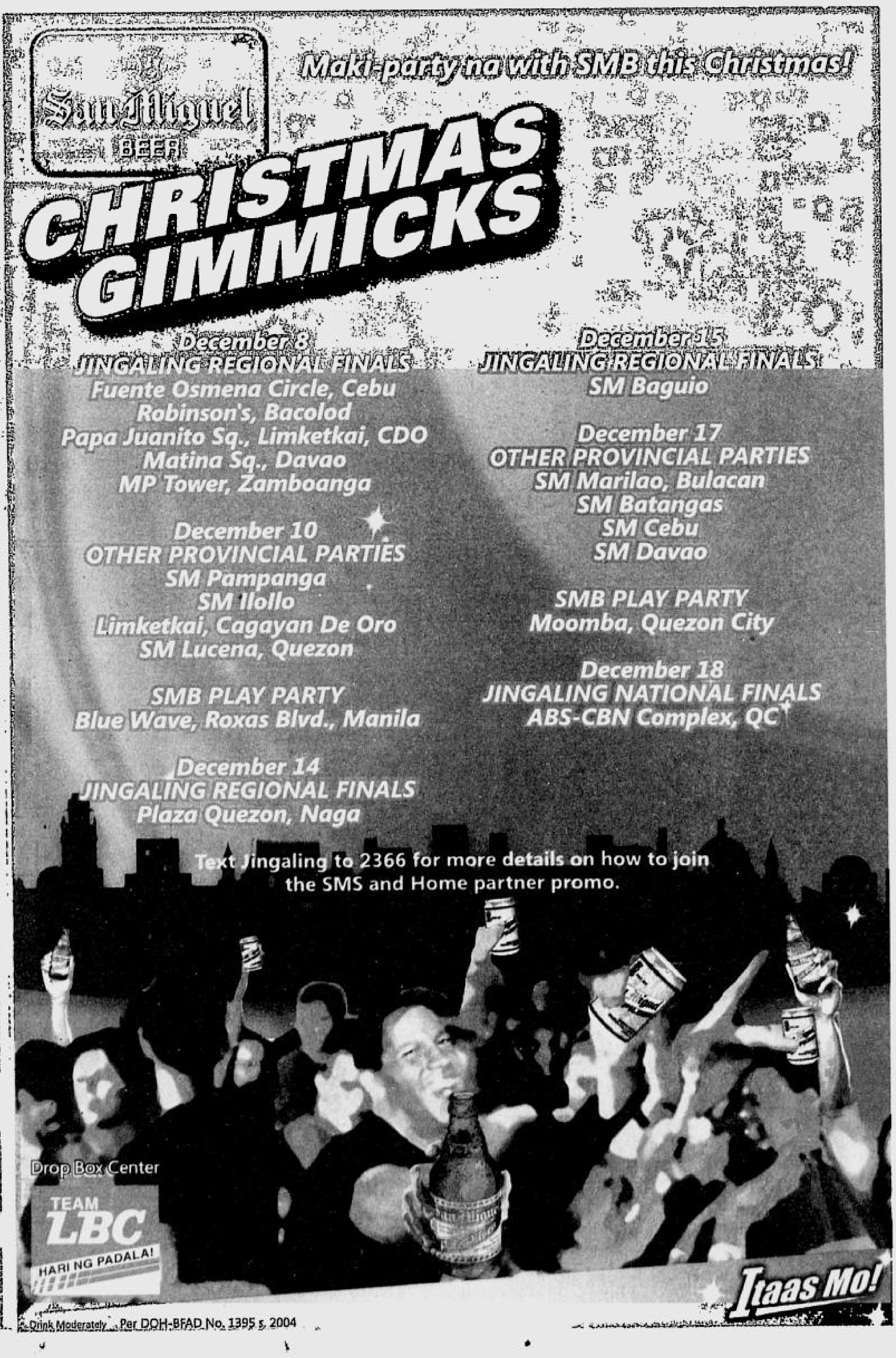

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Plaza Quezon, Naga

December 15
JINGALING REGIONAL FINALS
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Refresher course for tutors

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A REFRESHER course in English for those teaching the language.

Hundreds of Manila's public school teachers would become students of the English language anew, as the local school division has scheduled an English proficiency training program as part of the city's implementation of the English-only policy in its schools.

Noting the need for an English refresher course among public school teachers, Isabelita Santos, assistant superintendent of Manila's Division of City Schools (DCS), said teachers have grammar problems in both spoken and written English, something that school officials would not want the teachers to pass on to students.

Thus, after Manila Mayor Lito Atienza announced in June his planned city-wide implementation of English proficiency programs for students and teachers, the DCS, upon its own initiative, drafted a teacher training program.

Called the Intensive English Proficiency Training for Teachers, the program aims to "refresh teachers' knowledge of the nuances and intricacies of English as a medium of instruction and facilitate language acquisition through formal and functional use," among other objectives, as stated in a DCS paper explaining the program.

Mistakes aplenty

For the first phase, some 900 English elementary and high school teachers were put through an English diagnostic test that focused on grammar.

Even while the DCS had yet to finish checking the answers, Santos already has an idea how the results would be like.

"We saw many mistakes in the first few papers we checked," she said.

"There was even one essay that made us all laugh out loud because of the errors," Santos added.

Based on the results of the diagnostic test, teachers would be enlisted in English refresher classes that would target their specific weaknesses, Santos said.

Classes begin next week, and the English teachers would be required to attend twice-a-week sessions to be handled by English supervisors.

Number code scheme backed

By Margaux C. Ortiz

NOT ALL bus operators are against the number coding scheme.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has received requests from legitimate bus operators to restore the number coding scheme on Edsa months after it was lifted.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the bus operators complained that their earnings dwindled since the scheme was suspended last March.

"More buses on Edsa means more competitors," Vergel de Dios said in an interview.

"The operators said they lose a significant part of their daily earnings to other buses," he added.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered the immediate exemption of public buses from the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program or UVVRP.

The move was seen as an effort to keep bus companies from joining the clamor for a fare hike before the elections.

No increase, if...

Bus operators had stated that they would not press for a P1.50 fare increase if the MMDA would lift the UVVRP that has limited the utilization of their fleet.

The operators of some 3,000 buses had blamed the coding scheme for their reduced income.

The scheme had cut the number of public buses on Edsa by 20 percent.

"But these operators soon found out that the number of passengers in the main thoroughfare remains constant despite the additional number of buses on the road," Vergel de Dios said.

Modifications

The traffic chief said the bus operators, however, are asking for a few modifications in the scheme.

Vergel de Dios said the operators reasoned out that the original scheme sometimes prevented some of their newer and well-maintained buses from plying the road.

Instead of basing the scheme on the last number of their plates, the bus operators asked the agency to issue special UVVRP cards so they could choose which units to keep in their garages.

"They said the original scheme would not be turned down with their suggestion because it would still prevent 20 percent of their units from plying Edsa," Vergel de Dios said.

But MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said the proposed modifications could cause problems for the agency.

"These special cards could easily be faked by unscrupulous operators," Fernando said.

"The old system has been proven to work for everyone," he stressed.

JUST A HINT AWAY. Christmas is just around the corner at Manila's Baywalk, spruced up with Yuletide decor not lost on visitors on a holiday mood.

ERIK ARAZAS

Why actor William Martinez got off the hook

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

ACTOR William Martinez has been acquitted of the charge of illegal possession of drug paraphernalia by the Pasay City Regional Trial Court.

Lack of evidence, according to the court.

"The court finds the prosecution's evidence on the improvised tooter allegedly seized from Martinez legally weak, unreliable and unconvincing as the prosecution failed to identify that the glass tube presented in court was the same improvised tooter allegedly confiscated from the accused."

In short, the glass tube used in sniffing shabu that was seized on Martinez was not the one presented in court.

The prosecution and the police were probably paid off to screw up the evidence so that the case against the actor would become weak.

I've come across court cases where the police and the prosecution, after receiving bribe money from the accused, tampered with the evidence. Like presenting in court the wrong item used by the accused.

The court didn't have any recourse but to acquit the accused since the evidence against him had become weak.

That probably happened in the case of Martinez.

It was highly unlikely that the glass tube seized on the actor had disappeared such that the prosecution had to come up with another tooter as evidence.

Nothing is impossible in this country when money moves.

***

Had they listened to then Sen. Orlando Mercado, there would have been no repeat of the Ormoc tragedy in 1991 when floodwaters rampaged through the city, drowning 4,000 people.

More than 1,000 people died from landslides and floods in Quezon, Aurora and other places hardest hit by the series of typhoons and depressions.

Mercado was calling for a total log ban, without exception.

But his colleagues in the Senate and in the House of Representatives would have nothing of Mercado's proposal. Some of them were in the logging business or they were friends of legal and illegal loggers.

I asked Mercado about his reaction. The gentleman that he is, he wouldn't want to say, "I told them so."

All Mercado could say was that "some politicians slept in bed with illegal loggers."

When Mercado was secretary of national defense, he invited me to ride with him on a helicopter to Quezon where soldiers had seized illegal logs. He wanted to show me the extent of illegal logging in the area. I couldn't go with him because I was busy at the time.

Anyway, after he left, the confiscated logs were given back to their owners by corrupt officials at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

I once talked to a Marine assigned in Quezon at about that time. He said he and his comrades seized illegal logs. They placed their lives on the line when they did that because New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas were protecting the illegal loggers.

"*Nasayang ang aming pagod, sir,*" he said.

They should have shot those corrupt DENR officials.

Bantayog honors heroes

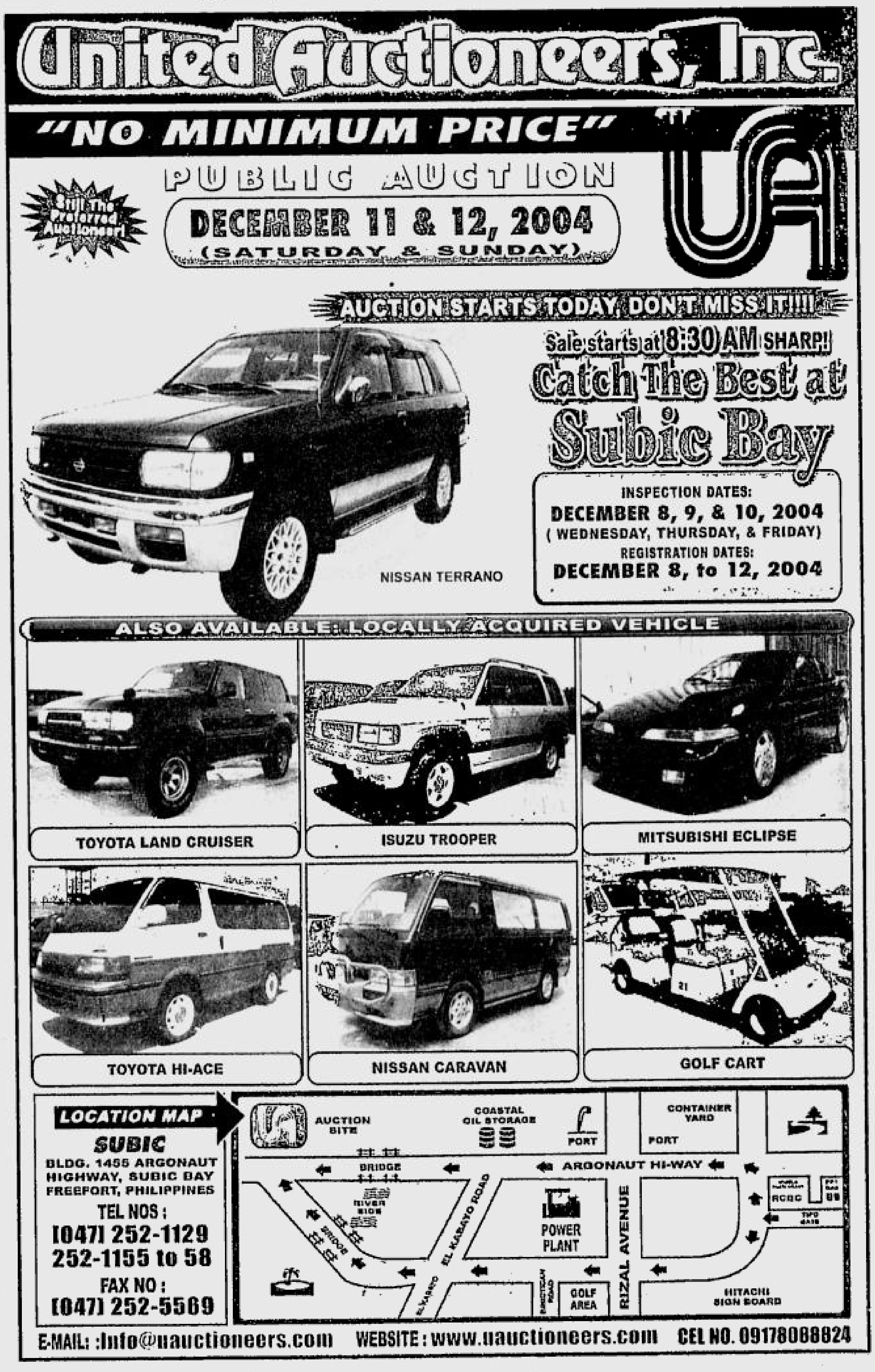
VETERAN journalist Jose Burgos Jr., two writers, a bishop, a lawyer and two student leaders will be honored as martyrs and heroes of the antidictatorship struggle by the Bantayog ng Mga Bayani Foundation in rites to be held today at the Wall of Remembrance, Quezon Avenue corner EDSA in Quezon City. Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca will grace the event as guest of honor and speaker.

The others to be cited for their bravery and integrity are student leaders Leandro "Lean" Alejandro, Artemio Jun S. Celestial Jr., writer Paula Carolina "Ayi" S. Malay, Bishop Laverne Mercado and labor lawyer Augusto "Bobbit" Sanchez.

Burgos, who died in Nov. 16, 2003, was the fearless founder-editor of the We Forum and Malaya newspapers, and is credited for being one of the pillars of the alternative or "mosquito" press in the dark days of the dictatorship.

Editha Burgos, Joe's widow, remembers her husband's funeral as "an outpouring of love, admiration and support for Joe from across the land."

She also praised the people who will share honors with him as "the brave men and women who have extended the legacy of courage with physical resolve and conviction, as well with selflessness and patriotism."



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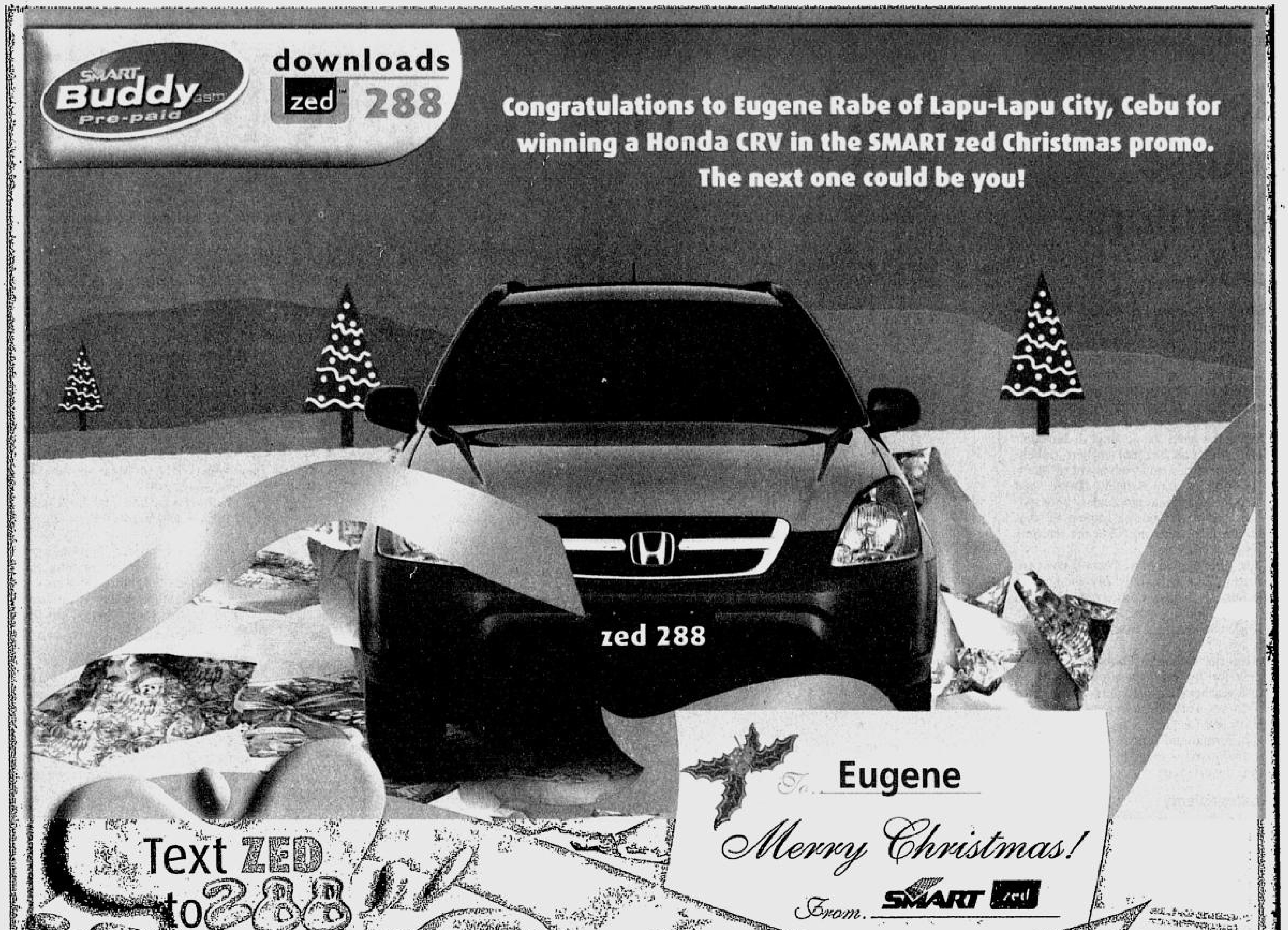
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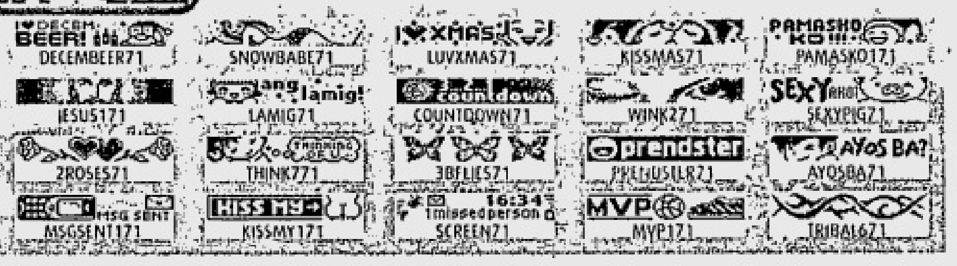
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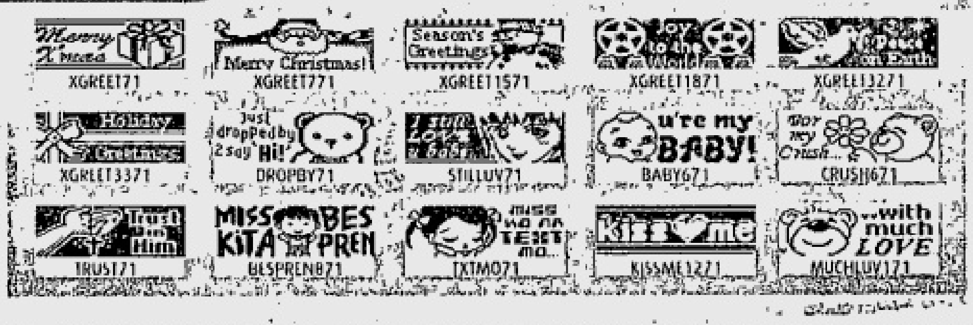
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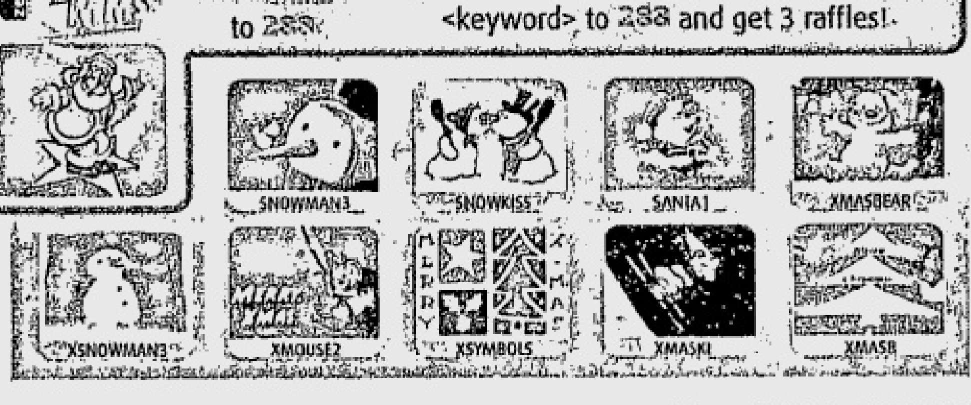
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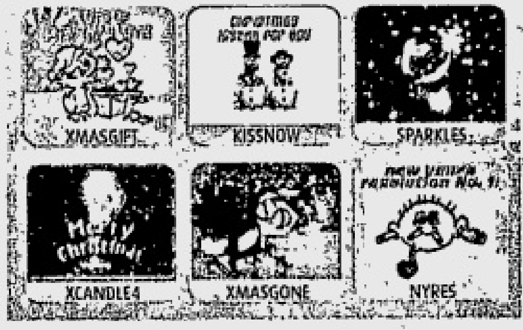
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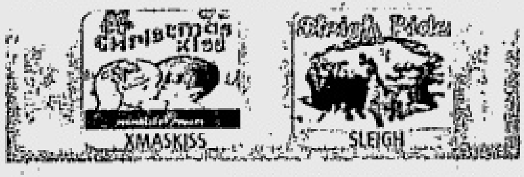
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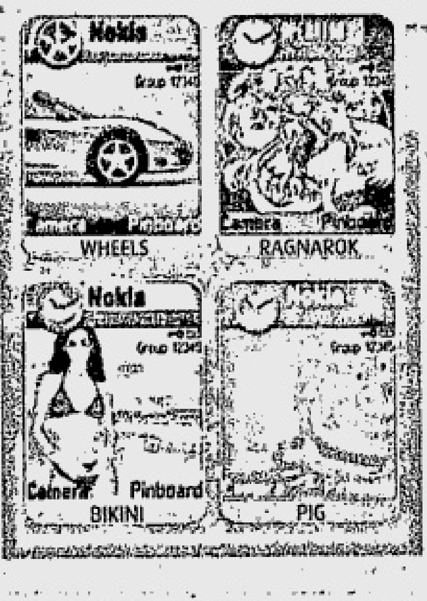
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SATURDAY,
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

A25

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

SPORTS TV

BOXING: Yanig sa Taguig; 7 p.m.; RPN 9 and Solar Sports—Manny Pacquiao tries to discharge 3K Battery in this much-awaited fight.

BASKETBALL: NBA-Grizzlies vs Heat; 8:30 a.m. (r-11 p.m.); Solar Sports: Blazers vs Jazz; 11:30 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.); ESPN—Memphis visits the Love Shaq in Miami even as Portland takes on Utah, which is playing minus AK47.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Compiled by L. Mangulat

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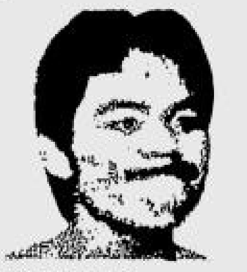
It will be fighter versus fighter

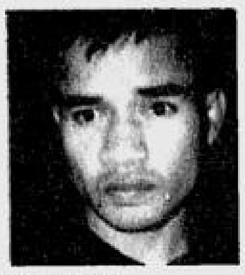
Pacquiao faces Fahsan tonight

By Recah Trinidad

A LOSS by Manny Pacquiao tonight could be as devastating as a disaster.



PACQUIAO



FAHSAN

But don't worry, said Lenny de Jesus, Pacquiao's cut man from Puerto Rico, who said he also came for a mercy mission and could stitch up the Thai fighter at the other corner of the ring tonight.

Pacquiao, 25, stakes his Ring Magazine featherweight title against Fahsan 3K Battery of Thailand in today's Yanig sa Taguig.

Fahsan, 30, had originally planned to run in the first four rounds to induce exhaustion before tearing at his famous foe.

Not anymore, said the Thai fighter, who confirmed yesterday he would bang it up with Pacquiao right at the first bell.

"There's no hope in running, we lose if we do that. It's not Fahsan's style, he's not a boxer but a pure fighter, he stands up and slugs it out," said Jimmy Chachotohang, Fahsan's manager.

So it will be fighter against fighter, said the Thai manager, because Pacquiao's style is similar to Fahsan's.

Perfect, said De Jesus who has been working the Philippine corner since Pacquiao's rise to world stardom three years ago. *(See Tale of the Tape on A30)*

Walking into a wall

"If he (Fahsan) comes out to fight, he would walk into a wall," De Jesus predicted. "I may have to sew him up."

The Puerto Rican, who first worked with Pacquiao when the RP hero stopped Lehlo Ledwabah for the world super bantamweight crown in Las Vegas three years ago, was present in yesterday's chaotic weigh-in at the UCC Coffee Shop at The Fort inside the Global City in Taguig.

Fahsan, visibly smaller, weighed 124 pounds.

Pacquiao breezed past the scales at 125 pounds, then flexed to bare bristling, metal-like contours in the belly section.

It was the same weight he had when he met Juan Manuel Marquez and Pacquiao was quick to claim he felt as strong as he did in Las Vegas last May.

Again, Pacquiao refused to make any prediction, saying he would just do his very best and dedicate the fight to his countrymen, mainly the poor victims of the calamitous floodings in Quezon province.

Appetite for knockout

But try as he did, he failed to conceal his boiling appetite for a knockout.

"*Huwag kang magulat kung matapos sa kanan* (Don't be surprised if I floored him with a right)" the sensational southpaw from GenSan told the INQUIRER before boarding his red Expedition.

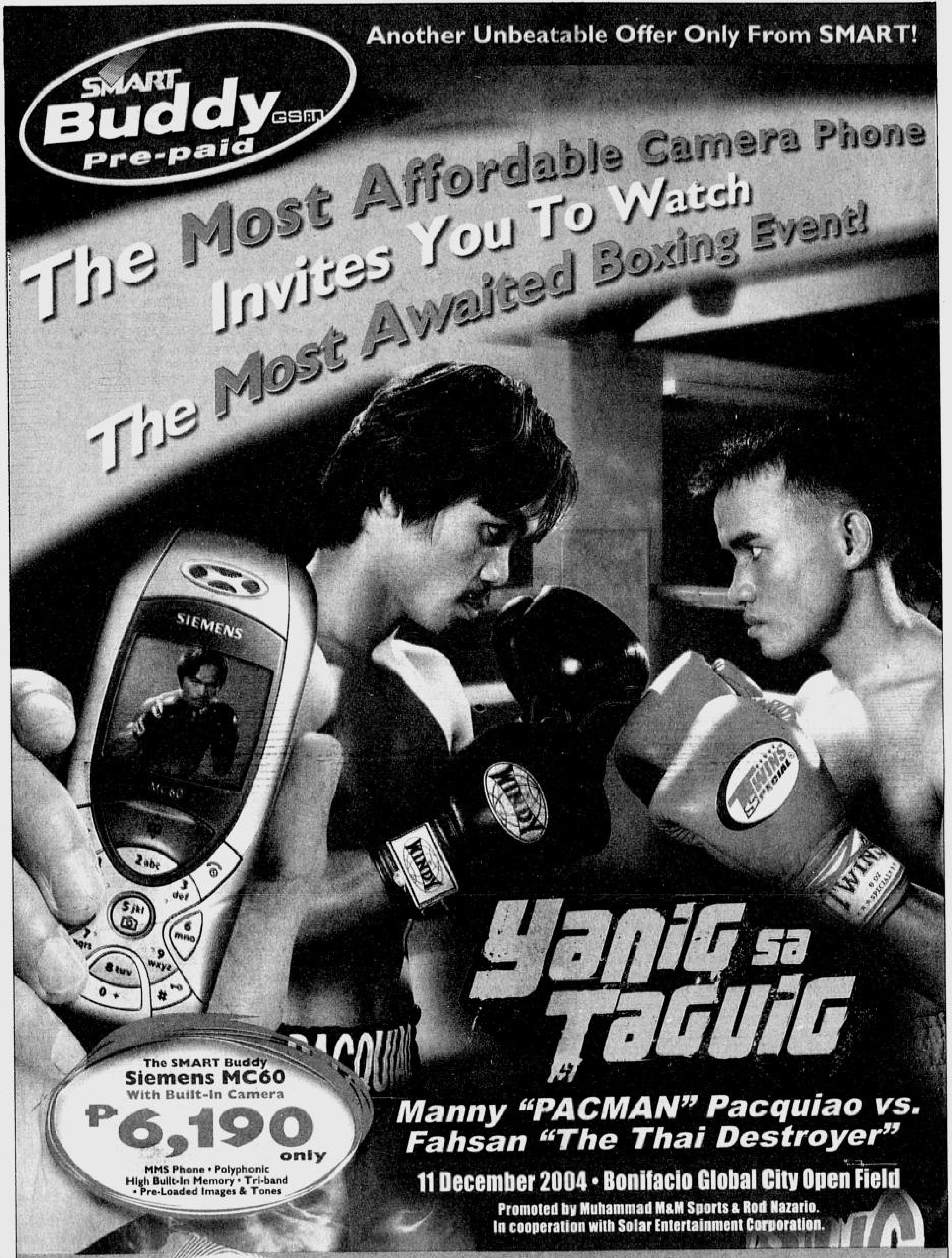
Unlike Pacquiao, 39-2-2, (30 KOs), who refused to brag about a knockout win, Fahsan, 44-71, stunned the fight presscon Thursday when he announced he would create a sensation by stopping Pacquiao.

Fahsan also claimed he knows of a hidden Pacquiao weakness which he would exploit inside the ring starting at 9.

The unified rules will be in effect in the 12-round title battle of southpaws, meaning there will be no three-knockdown rule and no fighter could be saved by the bell.

Assigned to referee the fight is Ferdinand Estrella. Veteran Bruce McTavish and newcomers Epi Almeda and Ricardo Canlas are the ring judges.

Top RP super flyweight 'Z' Gorres will fight Fahsan's stablemate while RP lightweight king Fernando Montilla defends his crown in the undercard.



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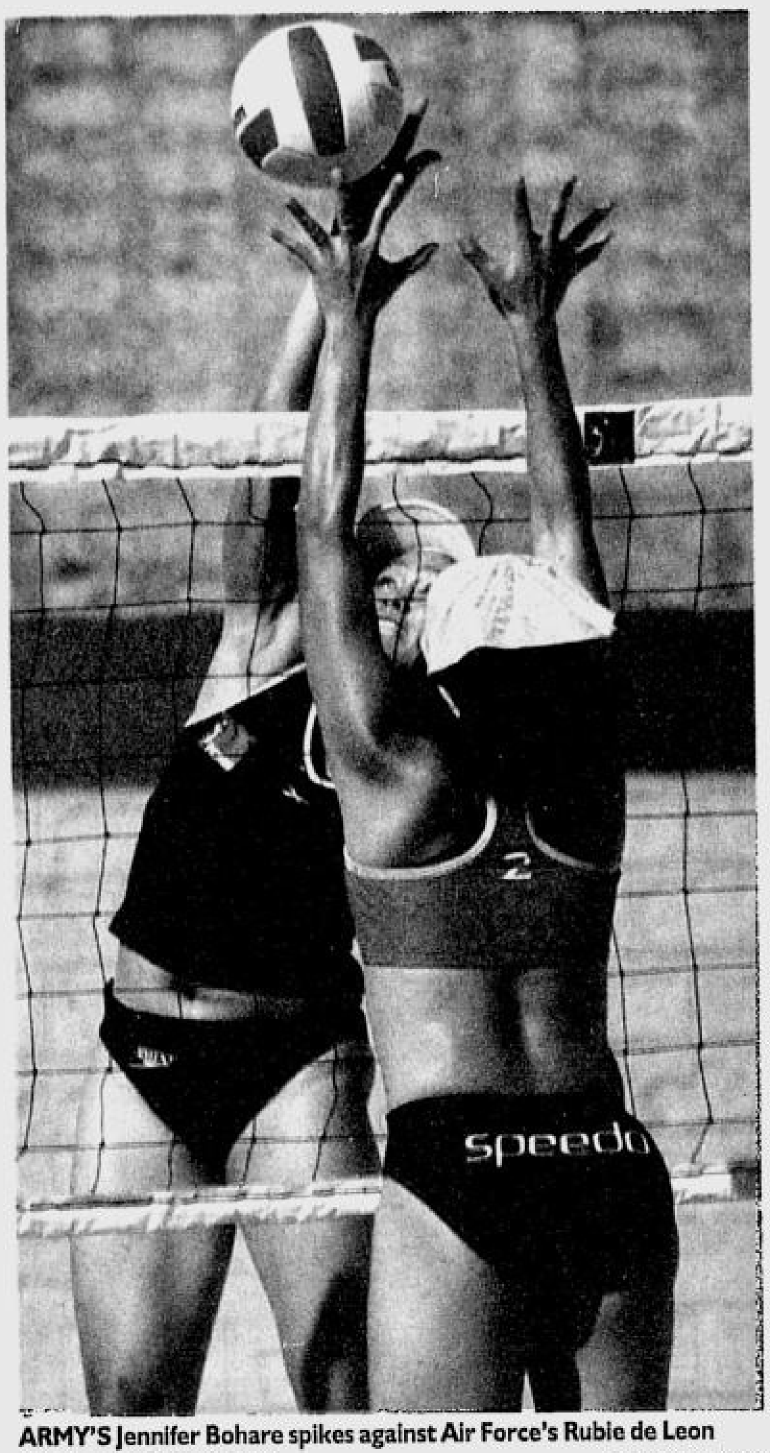

ARMY'S Jennifer Bohare spikes against Air Force's Rubie de Leon in the game won by PAF.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Favorites top foes in Petron 'volley'

THE FAVORITES were all business yesterday at the start of the fourth and final leg of the 2004 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament at the Cantada Sports Center.

Patricia Siatan and Jennifer Bohawe, back-to-back champions of the league's initial offering last year, clobbered the pair of Ruby de Leon and Josie May de la Rosa, 21-15.

Not to be outdone, the Philippine Navy tandem of Michelle Laborte and Cecille Tabuena, the meet's 3rd leg queens this year, crushed Michelle Pinero and Lenylyn Jimenez, 21-10.

Petron Advertising and Promotions executive Che-Che Tugbang graced the opening rites with Cantada Sports Center owner Boy Cantada and Petron volley organizer Tisha Abundo.

BAGUIO TILT

Nike Golf virtual Am champion

By Musong R. Castillo

BAGUIO CITY—Southwoods and Del Monte drew 39s from young turks in their respective rosters and gained some ground on Nike Golf Friday in the centerpiece Fil division of the 55th Fil-Am Golf Invitational here.

Antonio Asistio assembled a medal three-under-par 66 and Romeo Jaraula had two birdies and an eagle in a five-hole stretch at John Hay's back nine as Del Monte turned in a day-best 151 to make it a three-way race heading into the final 36 holes.

Southwoods took two points off Nike's overnight 14-point lead as Jun Jun Plana signed for a 37, Artemio Murakami a 36 and Michael Bibat a 35 for 147 and a 282 total on a day the leading team's all-star lineup struggled.

Juvic Pagunsan turned in a 38, Jun Bernis and Boyet Saragoza level 36s and Jay Bayron failed to rescue par with a 35 despite two eagles for the round as Nike totaled 145 for the day for a 294 overall total.

Del Monte, represented by the core of its PAL Interclub-winning squad, was now 16 points down from 22 at the start of the round as play shifts to the short but unpredictable Baguio Country Club course for the final two days.

While Nike Golf's Fil team ran into a semblance of opposition, its Am squad practically wrapped things up after a 135 at the par-61 BCC gave it a 26-point advantage over Southwoods and a 35-point bubble over Del Monte.

Tommy Manotoc, who put the two Nike teams together in his explosive return to the tournament after a three-year absence, felt confident of a double kill.

"I feel we have the players with the skills and the experience to withstand any comeback (in the Fil division)," said Manotoc, who turned in a second straight 36 for the Am team that now has a 267 total.

"Barring any major misfortune, like two of our (Am) players being disqualified, we have it in the bag," joked the 55-year-old Manotoc.

Former pro Dave Hernandez backed up Manotoc with a 35, JR Tanpinco registered a 34 and Ronnie Torrecampo was the last to count with his 34.

The best that the Nike Golf's Am pursuers could muster were identical 122s. Miko Yee had a 35 to pace Southwoods and Hanson So a 32. IG Gutierrez turned in a 30 and Olea Aran a 25 as Thirdy Escaño's 18 did not count.

Ben Miñoza signed for a 33 to pace Del Monte, which now has a 232 tally after 36 holes. Jett Plete (30), Arsenio Mondilla (32) and Ramon Velez (27) were the other scorers for Del Monte.

The tournament, with Smart as main presenter, drew a total of 1,011 players in seven divisions.

It is being supported by Northwest Airlines, Royal Caribbean, Lucerne Jewelers, Wilson Sports, Heritage Park, Caltex, Ottica Eyewear, Lamoiyan-Hapee, San Miguel, Aresi, Ayala Land, Club Marinduque and U-Bix Corp.

Liza, Chester enter q'finals

DEL ROSARIO

SINGAPORE—Asia's top female bowler, Liza del Rosario of the Philippines, cruised to the women's quarterfinals in the 40th AMF Bowling World Cup yesterday by shooting an eight-game series of 1750 pinfalls at the SuperBowl Safra Mount Faber lanes here.

With her 24-game qualifying total of 5318 carried over, Del Rosario compiled 7078 pins to rank third, behind pacesetting Shalin Zulkifli of Malaysia (7492) and Shannon Pluhowsky of the United States (7158). Del Rosario averaged 221.19 in 32 games.

The other Filipino entry in the prestigious individual tourney, Chester King, also finished third in the men's side with 5561 after 24 games. King closed out his fourth six-game block with 1405 with the help of a perfect game.

Australia's Ann-Maree Putney checked in fourth at 7047, followed by Puerto Rico's Yoselin Leon (6971), Sweden's Helen Johnson (6936), Scotland's Laura Rhoney (6861) and Canada's defending champion, Kerrie Ryan-Clach (6802).

The first match of the women's quarterfinals starts at 8 a.m. today.

It will be Zulkifli against Ryan-Clach, Pluhowsky against Rhoney, Del Rosario against Johnson and Putney against Leon in best-of-three game single elimination match plays.

Ryan-Clach edged Singapore's Valerie Teo by three pins to earn the eighth and final spot.

Entering the final game, the Canadian was 36 pins behind the Singaporean. Ryan-Clach fired a 236 while Teo managed only 197.

Australia's Jason Belmonte topped the 24-man field with 5886.

SPORTSWATCH

Castañares fights for WBF crown

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Philippine junior welterweight champion Dindo "Diesel" Castañares of ALA Boxing Gym fights for the vacant World Boxing Foundation junior welter crown against Colombia-born, New Zealand-based Guillermo "Pantera" Mosquera in a 12-round showdown at the Unitec ETA Stadium here. Both Mosquera and Castañares made the 140-lb limit yesterday during the official weigh-in supervised by WBF president Mick Croucher of Australia. Mosquera will be marrying his girlfriend, Sabrina of Italy, in a special ceremony inside the boxing ring before the fight. Castañares, with trainer Danny Bactol in his corner, will be cheered at ringside by his manager, Sammy "Don King" Gello-ani.

URBL Finals Game 1 on NBN today

THE URBL (United Regional Basketball League) best-of-five championship series will be aired over the National Broadcasting Network. Game One of the titular showdown between the Ilocos Sur Snipers and M. Lhuillier-Cebu City Jewelers is still being played at presstime yesterday and will be telecast at 4 p.m. today. Today's Game Two, sponsored by Lactovitale and adidas, will be aired over NBN at 6 p.m. URBL Commissioner Ramon Fernandez sealed the deal with NBN general manager Joey Isabelo for the entire country to be able to witness the intense action that drew packed crowds in Cebu, Quezon, Pampanga and Ilocos Sur. NBN reaches 22 market areas via satellite and is carried by over 450 cable operators nationwide.

Paragua vying in Singapore Masters

FILIPINO GM-candidate Mark Paragua left the country yesterday to compete in the 2004 Singapore Masters International Open which starts today at the Tao Nan School, Marine Crescent in Singapore. Paragua said the tournament will serve as part of his preparations for next year's Asian Individual Championships in India and the Manila SEA Games." The nine-round Swiss system event attracted nine grandmasters, six international masters, 13 Fide Masters (FM) and a woman grandmaster (WGM). Chinese GM Xu Jun (Elo 2589) and Russian GM Oleg Korneev (Elo 2583) hold the highest ratings among the confirmed entries. The total prize is $15,000 with the champion pocketing $3000. A Philippine team will also be in Singapore to compete in the Asian Youth Chess Championships to be held simultaneously with the Masters.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

NCA slates 15 national derbies

NATIONAL Cockers Association (NCA), the premier organization exclusive to big-time cockers, will present 15 national and two international derbies to determine the 2004-2005 NCA Cocker of the Year. NCA's opening event is a 7-cock derby on March 14 and 16 at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum with Frank Berin and Frankie Uy as co-hosts. The NCA members are, from Central Luzon: Frank Berin, Alex and Gerry Escalona, Patrick Puno, Max and Bebot Roxas, Ruel Feliciano and sons, Jun and Rudy Jingco, Jet Fernando, Madlambayan Brothers, Efren Canlas, Tony Marfori, JV Magsaysay, E. Nagano and Boyet Joson. Northern Luzon will be led by Rudy Albano, Edgar Santos, Chito Bersamin and Ruel Ricafort while from Mindanao are Claude Bautista, Ompong Plaza and Bebot Uy. To represent Southern Luzon are Patrick Antonio, Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo and Richard Bates while from the Visayas are former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, Gerry Espina, Arnold Mendoza, Boy Velez and Johnny Jalandoni. The Metro Manila contingent is composed of Ito Ynares, Raymond Velayo, Ronnie Puno, John Capinpin, Boy Jiao, Allan Tan, Tony Tan, Pepito Ngo, Butch Macasaet, Tos Reyes, William Co, George Antonio, Rene de Guzman and Ric Medina.

Noche Buena 5-cocker starts Dec. 23

RIDING high on the success of the just-concluded "Incredibol Na, Apordabol Pa" slashfest, topped by Rep. Ronnie Puno, Biboy E. of Tanay and engineer Felicisimo Austria, the Roligon Mega Cockpit management announced yesterday the holding of this year's edition of the annual Noche Buena 5-Cock derby. Now on its tenth year, this offering starts on Dec. 23. The second day of the 2-cock eliminations is set on the 27th with the 3-cock championship calendared on the 29th. Hosted by Rolly Ligon and sponsored by Thunderbird Power Feeds, the derby stakes a P1-million prize purse. Entry fee is P7,700 with the minimum bet set at P4,400.

Ateneo, San Agustin booters advance

THE UNDER-14 football squad of Ateneo de Manila University has joined Colegio San Agustin in the semifinal round of the Red Ribbon Football Fiesta tournament.

Gabie Manalo, Luis Mendoza, Jaggy Gangat and Nico Festejo scored one goal each while Mico Mabanag added two to lead Ateneo to a 6-1 win over Marist School Thursday. Jerome Diaz scored Marist's only goal in the 48th minute.

With the victory, Ateneo topped Group B in the elimination round. Colegio San Agustin finished on top of Group C. Xavier, also unscathed, defeated Mendiola FC, 3-0, and is level on points with Southridge School in Group A.

Iñigo Roxas hit the back of the net in the 20th and 57th minutes, while Alfonzo Tinio scored on the 40th to lead Xavier to the victory.

Meanwhile, the 7-a-side PFF/Red Ribbon Football Festival is set Dec. 19 at the Ateneo grounds in Katipunan. It is the Philippine Football Federation's last event of the year.

Red Ribbon Bakeshop has offered its current tournament and the Dec. 19 festival as a venue to scout players for the PFF/LEAD National Team project. For details, call Risha Ortega at the PFF at 6871598 or text inquiries to Everything Futbol Promotions at 0916-3660369.

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Gold Cup on tomorrow

ALL ROADS lead to the Santa Ana Park tomorrow as 13 of the country's most accomplished thoroughbreds vie for the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup, local racing's Holy Grail and definitive test of championship prowess.

The top contenders for the 2,050-meter classic include returning champions Red Star Rising (2003) and Free Wind (2002), division standouts' Cover Girl, Empire King and Dandansoy and three-time Gold Cup campaigner Lyonnais, in what promises to be a battle for the ages. Also in the hunt for the premier spot are classy 3-year-olds West Bound, War Hero, Kokopelli and Diktador.

At stake in the country's richest horse race is P2.5 million in prizes, with the winner guaranteed to take home P1.5 million and a replica of the Presidential Gold Cup to be awarded by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The battle for the premier spot in this year's Gold Cup is predicted to be a wide-open contest.

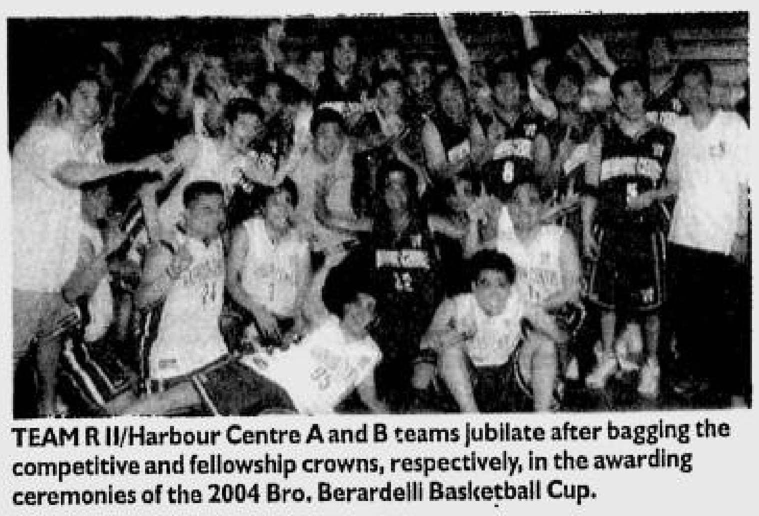
Harbour Centre teams win

TEAM R II/Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc.'s A and B teams bagged both the Competitive and Fellowship division plums in the 2004 Bro. Dominic Berardelli Basketball Cup—an all-La Salle Alumni basketball league hosted by La Salle Greenhills president Bro. Bernie Oca.

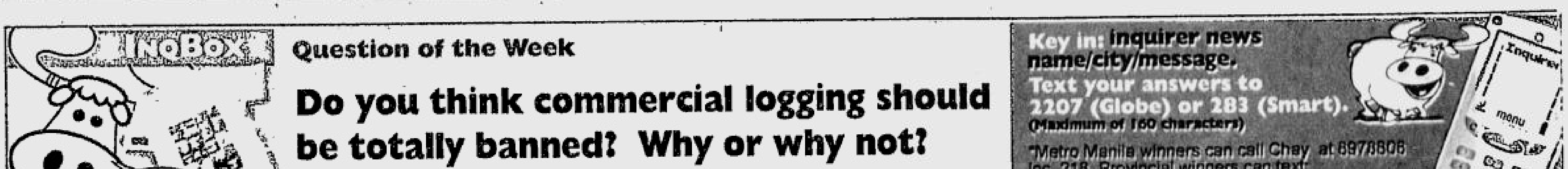
The twin victories by Team R II/Harbour Centre, led by former players Mikee and Nikkie Romero, was the first in the league's eight-year history.

Team R II-A is skippered by former La Salle Stalwart Rafa Dinglasan and composed of former PBA players Dindo Pumaren, Joey Sta. Maria, Dwight Lago, Juno Sauler, together with PBL players Erik Arejola, 2004 Competitive division MVP Francis Zamora, Mike Maglipon, Judge Primero, and Welcoat coach Caloy Garcia.

Team R II-B finished unbeaten and bested Shell Velocity Team in the Fellowship division Finals.



TEAM R II/Harbour Centre A and B teams jubilate after bagging the competitive and fellowship crowns, respectively, in the awarding ceremonies of the 2004 Bro. Berardelli Basketball Cup.



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SPORTSHOUSE WINS OUTSTANDING FILIPINO RETAILER AWARD 2004

By Nenet Galang-Pereña

Sportshouse International Leisure, Inc. was recently conferred the Outstanding Filipino Retailer 2004 for Medium Scale, Specialty Category by the Department of Trade (DTI) and the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA).

Sportshouse President Mars C. Chua together with three of his executives, AVP-Operations Tess Canoy-Ambayec, Marketing Manager Roy C. Ordiales and Category Manager Neil Guinto received the prestigious award in a ceremony held at the Isla Ballroom of the Shangri-La Edsa last November 30, 2004

Fitness Advocate

Since its founding two decades ago, Sportshouse has been advocating the love of sport and physical fitness in the country. The company vision, embodied in its motto: **"Bringing life into Sports and Sports into People's Lives"** aims at promoting a healthy and pro-active lifestyle among Filipinos. By offering quality gear and equipments at very affordable prices, the company is helping Filipinos actively engage in fitness exercises and is thus helping enhance the quality of life and prevent illnesses endemic in a sedentary lifestyle.

DTI and PRA

The DTI is a government institution that seeks to develop the entrepreneurial spirit in the country, while the PRA is a nationwide association dubbed as the "Pulse and Voice of the Philippine Retail Industry" which aims to promote, expand and develop local industries. The two combined forces to acknowledge the achievements of corporations like Sportshouse through an awarding rite given yearly. Its roster of past recipients comprise the pantheon of dedicated establishments who are committed to the highest levels of excellence and standards of service throughout the years.

This year, they are honored to confer the Outstanding Filipino Retailer in the Medium Scale, Specialty Category to Sportshouse, whom they deem has been setting goals that complement nation building efforts in the field of commerce and industry.

DTI Assistant Secretary J. Norman Hocson attests: "Sportshouse deserve this accolade because of its sterling track record as a Filipino retailer of sports equipments with value for money."

PRA President Bienvenido Tantoco, himself a veteran in the retail industry testifies: "Sportshouse is a fine example of a company that started small but gradually became a giant in terms of solid reputation and responsibility."

Sportshouse Corporate and Celebrity Cup 2

True to its tradition of hosting events that make an impact in the sports scene of the country, Sportshouse sponsored a badminton championship at the SM Megamall Atrium in Mandaluyong City last July.

No less than former First Lady and Philippine Badminton Association (PBA) president Amelita "Ming" Ramos, graced the event organized by Sportshouse with Dunlop Sports for the second straight year.

Sportshouse recognizes the rising popularity of badminton and thus strives to drum up its following even more with tournaments such as this.

In the past, Sportshouse has also sponsored a Dart Tournament at the Ali Mall-Araneta Center and a Basketball Fiesta highlighted by a shoot-out with the stars at the SM Megamall.

All of these affairs boasts of big names in the entertainment and sports field as guests, thus drawing big crowds of sports fans and afficionados.

Bringing Sports to Consumers' Doorsteps

Believing that a healthy citizenry is the lynchpin of development, Sportshouse aims to bring sports activities within the reach of the common Filipino. It offers a wide assortment of gear and equipments which will last a long time and thus be faithful companions in their daily work-outs and exercise regimens.

Sportshouse is also a nationwide chain with conspicuously located branches all over the archiplegao, ensuring that sports will always be accessible to the "common tao". Their newest outlet is Sportshouseplus located at the 2nd floor of SM Southmall Arena. Other new branches include SM Batangas and SM Dasmariñas. Soon to serve the public this December is Sportshouseplus Market Market branch at 4th level beside Food Choices.

With upheld vision for Sportshouse and its loyal clients, Mr. Chua says "as Outstanding Filipino Retailer for 2004, we aim to continue offering products which will ensure that sports and a healthy lifestyle are within the reach of every Filipino."

This holiday season Sportshouse' special item for shoppers is Canguro Flex Shoes and sports cap offered at very low price.

Other awards received this year include Parangal ng Bayan 2004 Consumers' Choice Awardee as The Most Outstanding Sports and Outdoor Retailer of the Year given last March and National Consumers Award as Top Athletic Sports and Equipment Store given last August.

To all our patrons and loyal customers.

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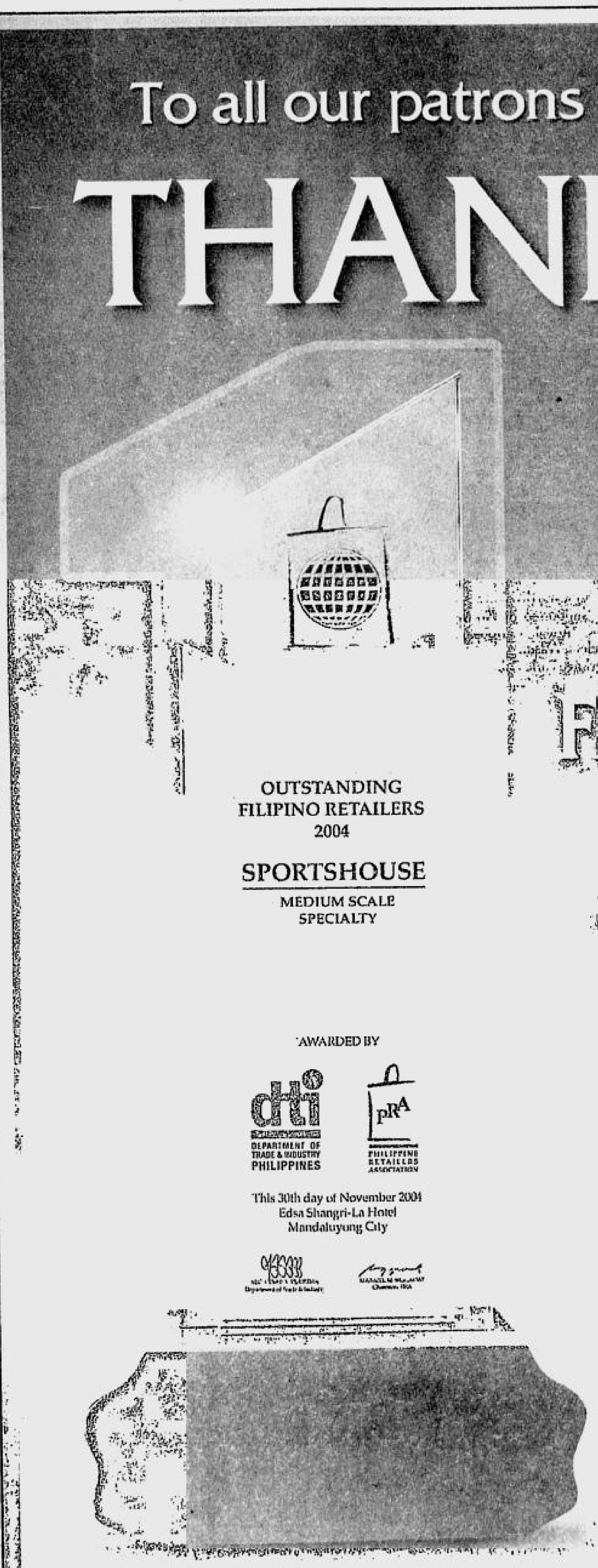

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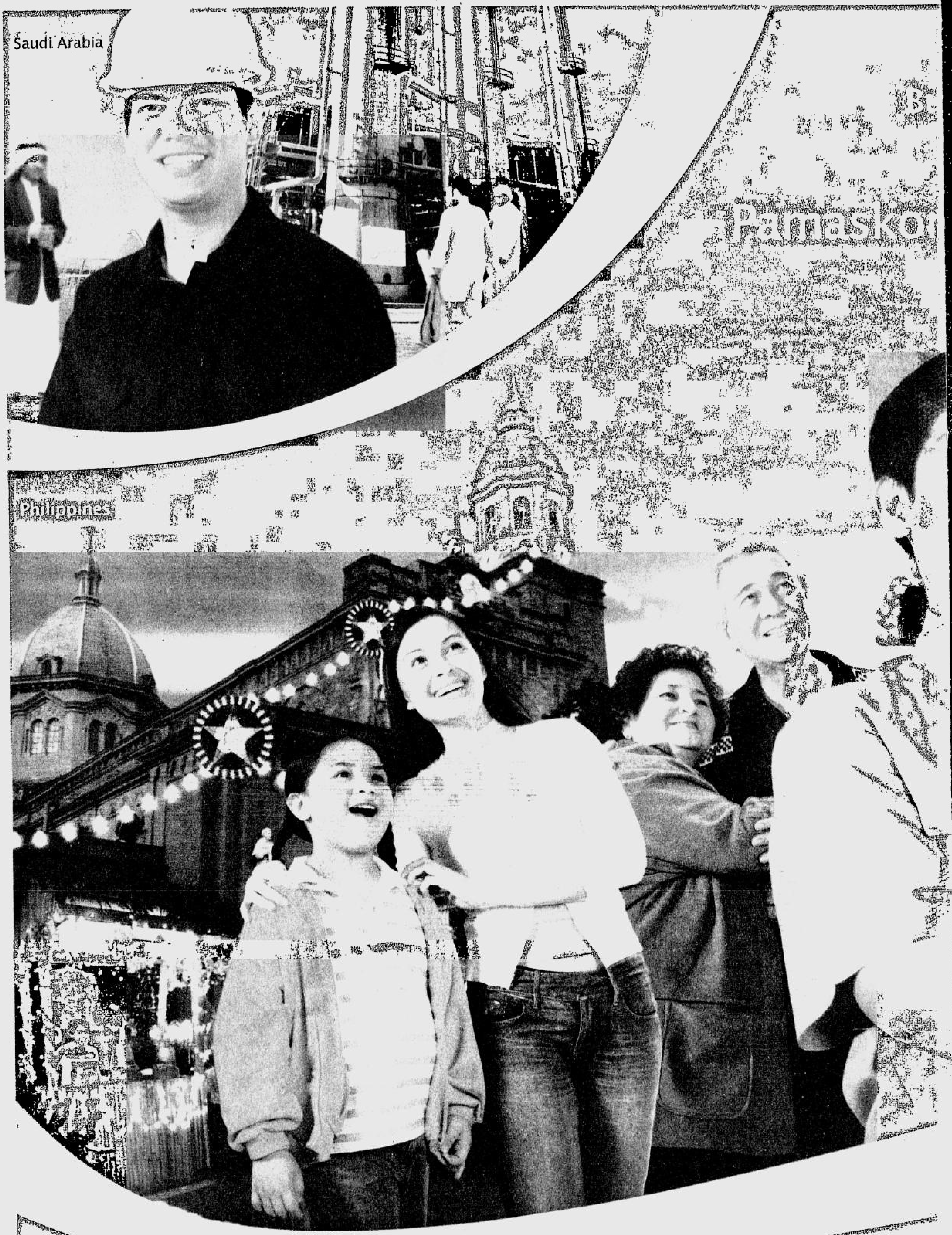

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Dad-wanna-be Woods shares Target lead

THOUSAND OAKS, California—Now that he's married, Tiger Woods says it won't be long before he starts a family.

"I don't want to be an old father," Woods said on Thursday. "I still want to be young. We're not going to wait too long."

Woods, who turns 29 at the end of the month, married Swedish nanny Elin Nordegren on Oct. 5 in Barbados after they dated for about two years. Nordegren will be 25 on Jan. 1.

Woods did not say when they planned to have children, but that he wanted more than one.

"For me, it will be bigger than it will be for Elin because she's had siblings," Woods said. "I've been an only child. When we have, hopefully, more than one, then it will be really different because I've never dealt with that."

Woods said he would introduce his children to golf, but not push them toward playing. And if he has a son in the next few years, could he envision playing with him on the PGA Tour?

"I would love to have that happen, if I'm still around," said Woods, who shared the lead with two others in the first round of the Target World Challenge Thursday.

Colin Montgomerie hit a 5-wood into about 8 feet for eagle on the 15th hole, giving him a 4-under 67 and a share of the lead Woods and Jim Furyk.

"I played quite well," Montgomerie said. "Anytime you can equal Tiger Woods, well, that's OK."

Woods and Furyk didn't do anything quite so dramatic. They just kept out of trouble and avoided the kind of mistakes that knocked Chris DiMarco out of the lead twice and sent Vijay Singh to a 3-over 74, matching the worst round on a pristine day at Sherwood Country Club.

Woods overcame a sluggish start with a 5-iron out of the damp rough and under a tree that came within inches of going into the hole at No. 4. That left him a tap-in birdie.

Furyk was among three players who had the outright lead on the back nine until he missed the 18th green, chipped to 12 feet and watched his par putt turn away just at the end.

All of them have something to play for in Woods' year-end tournament with 15 of the best players in golf.

Woods failed to win a stroke-play event on the PGA Tour for the first time in his career and lost his No. 1 ranking to Singh, but recently said his swing changes were coming together. He won in Japan last month, and sees this tournament as another building block for next year.

Furyk had surgery on his left wrist in March, missed the first half of the season and failed to win on the PGA Tour for the first time since 1997.

And then there's Monty.

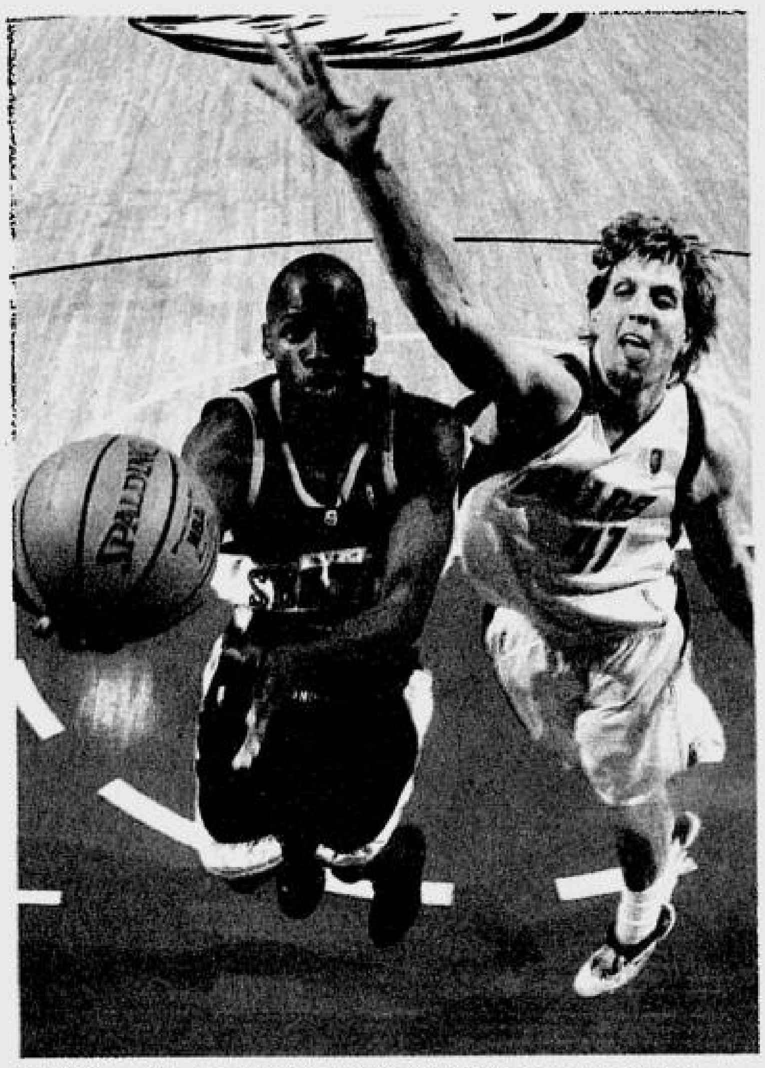
He has tumbled to No. 79 in the world ranking—one spot behind Yang Youn-eun of South Korea—in part because of a very public divorce from his wife this summer. *AP*

REUTERS

WOODS: I don't want to be an old father.

Lewis lifts Sonics past Mavs

Houston, Boston win thrillers


RAY Allen of the Seattle Supersonics jumps to the hoop against forward Dirk Nowitzki of the Dallas Mavericks. AFP

DALLAS—Rashard Lewis erased a fourth-quarter deficit then protected Seattle's lead with a high-flying baseline dunk, a 3-pointer as the shot clock expired and two freethrows with 18.5 seconds to go in the Supersonic's 107-102 victory Thursday over the Dallas Mavericks.

"Rashard is playing like a man possessed," said teammate Ray Allen, who followed his 29 against the Spurs with 22. "He's on a mission. He's been a guy who's willing to stand back and watch, but this year he's stepping up and is one of the guys at the forefront."

One night after becoming the first team this season to win in San Antonio, Seattle won its fourth straight game and ninth in 10 games to reclaim the NBA's best record at 17-3.

Dallas lost at home for the fifth time this season, matching last year's total in just 12 games. More troubling for the Mavericks is that all the losses have come against winning teams.

"We really fought to get back into the game and take the lead, but it just seemed like they hit big shot after big shot," Mavs coach Don Nelson said.

Vladimir Radmanovic had 18 points for Seattle, including 5-of-7 on 3-pointers.

Dirk Nowitzki led the Mavericks with 27 points.

In Houston, Tracy McGrady scooped up a loose ball and hit a running 3-pointer with 1.7 seconds left to help Houston complete a rally from a 10-point deficit in the final minute and beat San Antonio, 81-80.

McGrady scored 13 points in the final 35 seconds, including four difficult 3-pointers, to finish with 33 points, eight rebounds and five steals in the biggest last-minute comeback for Houston.

The Rockets have won three straight for the first time this season, and snapped an eight-game losing streak against their 1-10 rivals. The Spurs lost their second straight, a night after a tough defeat against Seattle in San Antonio.

Yao Ming had 27 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets.

In Portland, Oregon, Shareef Abdur-Rahim hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer as Portland tweaked Boston, 89-87.

Boston led 87-84 with 29.3 seconds left, but Zach Randolph made two freethrows to make it a one-point game. After letting time run down, the Celtics' Gary Payton tried to get the ball in to Paul Pierce, but the shot-clock expired and left Portland with one final chance to win.

Abdur-Rahim caught an outlet pass from Derek Anderson, set up from 25 feet and drilled the winning shot. He was then mobbed by his teammates, who celebrated a hard-fought victory.

Abdur-Rahim finished with 15 points and 14 rebounds, and Randolph has 22 points and 17 rebounds for the Blazers, who ended a two-game losing streak.

Payton and Mark Blount had 14 points each for Boston, which has lost three straight on its West Coast road trip. Leading scorer Pierce, suffering from flu symptoms, played but was ineffective, finishing with six points. *AP*

UAAP team clinches 4th gold in Indonesia

TEAM UAAP-Philippines clinched a fourth gold medal courtesy of the men's 4x100-meter relay team Thursday to become the second winningest squad in swimming of the 12th ASEAN University Games in Surabaya, Indonesia.

The four golds also surpassed the three won by another Team UAAP in the biennial event's 11th edition the country hosted in 2002.

The team of Athens Olympian Timmy Chua, Evan Grabador and Jeffrey Laguitao all of UP and Benjamin Uy of DLSU clocked 04:03.75 to beat Thailand (04:06.87) for the gold medal.

The country only sent a swimming team in the competition and the swimmers, supported by Speedo, also grabbed six silvers and three bronzes to trail trail Thailand (9-5-1). Indonesia (1-3-9) was third, followed by Singapore (0-0-1). Vietnam and Brunei have yet to bag a medal.

Grabador and Luica Dacanay, also of UP, clinched the country's first two gold medals Wednesday.

Dacanay, with Fatima Amago (UST), Nicole Santiago (Ateneo) and another UP tanker, sparked the women's 4x100 medley relay team to the gold in 4:44.71 on Day Two of the competition. It was the third gold for the RP team headed by Jose Capistrano Jr. of Ateneo.

Klitschko defends title; Tyson faces prison term

LAS VEGAS—Vitali Klitschko's dream was always to fight Mike Tyson. For now, he'll have to settle for fighting the man who last beat Tyson.

Klitschko defends his WBC heavyweight title Saturday against Danny Williams, who made a name for himself in July when he stopped Tyson in the fourth round in one of the bigger boxing upsets of recent times.

"Danny Williams destroyed my dream of fighting Mike Tyson," Klitschko said. "Now I will destroy his dream of becoming world heavyweight champion."

Meanwhile, Tyson could face 5 3/4 years behind bars after being cited by police on suspicion of felony criminal damage in a nightclub incident, the Arizona Republic reported.

A bar patron in suburban Scottsdale accused Tyson of leaping on to his car and pounding his fists on the hood of the vehicle outside the Pussycat Lounge on November 27.

The newspaper reported that Asaf Alikadic, a 22-year-old Serbian immigrant, stopped to allow people to walk in front of his white Toyota and Tyson leaped on the hood while screaming.

A Municipal Court hearing was scheduled for December 17. Because of his troubled history, Tyson could face nearly six years behind bars if convicted.

Williams was nowhere on the heavyweight radar when Klitschko won the title vacated by the retirement of Lennox Lewis against Corrie Sanders in April.

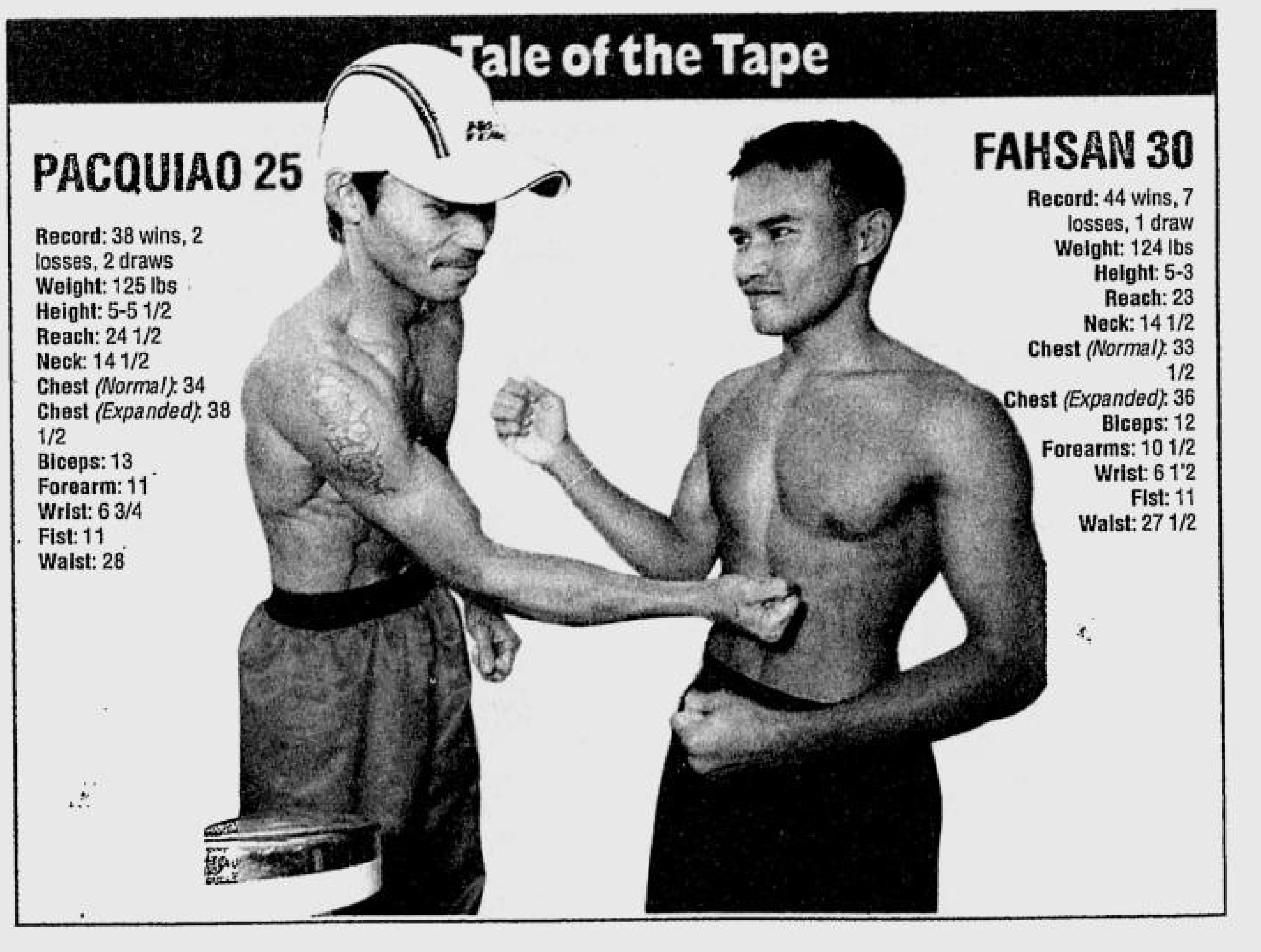
Thinking he would be an easy opponent for the latest Tyson comeback, Williams was picked to fight Tyson in Louisville on July 30. Williams upset a lot of plans by surviving a first round barrage from Tyson and stopping him three rounds later.

Klitschko wasn't happy about losing a possible big fight with Tyson.

"I was so upset that I couldn't believe my eyes that it was happening," Klitschko said. "I was surprised how good Danny Williams was."

Heavyweight title fights are usually big fights, but this one is the biggest yet. At least in the ring, where Williams (270 pounds; 121.5 kilograms) and Klitschko (250 pounds; 112.5 kilograms) combined to break a record for the heaviest heavyweight title fight ever. *AP*

Tale of the Tape



PACQUIAO 25

Record: 38 wins, 2 losses, 2 draws
Weight: 125 lbs
Height: 5-5 1/2
Reach: 24 1/2
Neck: 14 1/2
Chest *(Normal)*: 34
Chest *(Expanded)*: 38 1/2
Biceps: 13
Forearm: 11
Wrist: 6 3/4
Fist: 11
Waist: 28

FAHSAN 30

Record: 44 wins, 7 losses, 1 draw
Weight: 124 lbs
Height: 5-3
Reach: 23
Neck: 14 1/2
Chest *(Normal)*: 33 1/2
Chest *(Expanded)*: 36
Biceps: 12
Forearms: 10 1/2
Wrist: 6 1'2
Fist: 11
Waist: 27 1/2

A character of its own

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

AS I write this, it would seem Nike Golf was not only on its way to a smashing debut in the Fil-Am Golf Invitational in Baguio City. With its baptism of fire on Thursday swathed with explosive performances, the newcomer seemed headed to a Cinderella victory in the fabled event now on its 55th year.

Suddenly, all the opposition can do is shake their heads and pray that Nike Golf does not make mincemeat of its foes in the remaining rounds of the tournament.

My oh my, look what it has done in Day One alone: a 14-point margin over three-time champion Southwoods in the premiere Fil Championship Division and a 13-point edge, also over Southwoods, in the Am Championship Division.

What's this, a replica of, say, GMA posting that unbelievable one-sided victory over FPJ in Cebu in the last presidential polls that clinched for her a six-year stay at the Palace?

Looks like it, if you ask me.

If and when Nike Golf is crowned champion in both the Fil and Am Championship Divisions tomorrow, Sunday, the biggest credit goes to Tommy Manotoc. Tommy, now the Fil-Am's prodigal son for having snapped out of his vow in 2001 never to return to the tournament, has assembled two teams equipped with the sock and wallop of the last three killer typhoons combined.

A 32 at Camp John Hay by Abe Rosal on Thursday was not even good enough and had to be struck out of Nike Golf's output in the Fil Championship in lieu of the 39s of Jay Bayron and Jun Bernis, 36 by Juvic Pagunsan and 35 by Boy Saragosa Jr. in the five-to-play, four-to-count format.

And then over at Baguio Country Club that same day, Matthew Manotoc's 30 did not count for Nike Golf in the Am Championship even as Matthew's own father, Tommy, blazed the field with a 36 (even par). Thirty-twos by JR Tanpingco, Dave Hernandez and Ronnie Torrecampo could be signs of things to come: A seemingly inevitable rout of the opposition.

Only a miracle can save Mizuno-DHL, down by 18 points after Round One, from losing its Fil Championship crown.

Indeed, almost every Fil-Am Golf Invitational event has a character of its own. Every year is a new beginning. This 55th edition is no exception.

***

How can Manny Pacquiao not win tonight?

He is not only fighting on home ground, a built-in advantage for any homegrown boxer up against an invader in the sleaze-infested world of boxing.

The country's boxing darling is also fighting someone with a name not worth remembering so that, maybe, with a single Pacquiao punch, the pretender from Thailand could be sent to dreamland. God forbid, not to a hospital.

Promoters have only been talking about Fahsan 3K Battery as having beaten more than 20 Filipino boxers. Gosh, isn't that a lot? Save for Pacquiao, have we really been producing patsies in the ring all these years?

If you think Fahsan can pull off a miracle tonight, I suspect you also expected Brother Eddie to win the presidency last May.

This much I can tell you, fellas: Pacquiao's No. 1 worry once the referee signals the start of the fight is how not to knock Fahsan out in the first round. I don't know if the world-renowned Freddie Roach, the only trainer that Pacquiao listens to, has a formula for that.

For, if Roach has none and Pacquiao knocks out Fahsan just seconds into the first round, the ring idol can be guilty of putting television promoters out of business, if not disappointing fight buffs who usually love to see more gore than a lightning-quick ending.

Two rounds maybe? Or three?

Well, it will all really depend on what mood Pacquiao would be in when he climbs the ring tonight. If he has a billiards date after the fight, then our TV bigwigs have a monumental problem in their hands. Fans could be in for a big disappointment in the form of an early Pacquiao win by KO.

I can only pray that before Fahsan answers the first bell, he has signed an insurance.

***

FASTBREAK. Cheers to Dr. Christian Bocobo and Beth Celis, who will launch their book on the nation's basketball legends today at the ELJ Communications Center, ABS-CBN Compound, QC. Interestingly, Dr. Bocobo is a first cousin of lawyer Rico Agcaoili, the amiable president of the Baguio Country Club.

TNT rips San Mig

By June Navarro

THEY took him for granted and he made them pay for it.

Allan Salansang drilled two wide-open three-pointers to spark a fiery windup that led to a resounding 97-82 Talk 'N Text victory over San Miguel Beer in the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Coming off the bench, the 6-foot-5 Salansang buried his triples back-to-back as the Phone Pals outscored the Beermen, 36-23, in the final quarter and went on to notch their 11th win in 15 games.

"The starters did what they had to do but the players coming off the bench gave us a big lift in the endgame. I hope we continue doing this," said coach Joel Banal, after the Phone Pals stopped their three-game slide.

By repeating over the Beermen in this conference, the Phone Pals regained the driver's seat and relegated erstwhile frontrunner Barangay Ginebra (10-4) to second place. The Phone Pals beat the Beermen, 93-89, in their initial encounter.

Struggling in their last seven games, the Beermen lost for the eighth time in 15 games.

"It was hell playing three games in six days and that cost us two consecutive games," said Banal.

Kenneth Duremdes canned a pull-up jumper with 6.5 seconds left to lift Sta. Lucia Realty past Purefoods, 91-89, in the second game. The Realtors improved to 5-9 while the Hotdogs fell to 7-8.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 97—Telan 23, Miller 20, Pablo 12, Carnaso 11, Ravena 10, Salansang 8, Alapag 5, Belano 4, De Ocampo 4, Fran 3.

SAN MIGUEL 82—Seigle 18, Hontiveros 17, Belasco 16, Villoria 10, Ildefonso 9, Racela 8, Gahol 2, Peña 2 Singson 0, Mente 0.

Quarters: 18-12, 40-36, 61-59, 97-82

Jewels, Wizards try to stay 1-2

ALEX Compton has been sizzling for the Montaña Jewels.

With his torrid 23.5-shooting average in the last two games, the veteran guard has propelled Montaña back to the top.

Compton is again expected to lead the Jewels when they battle the Toyota Otis-Letran Knights in the PBL Open Championship at 2 p.m. today at the San Sebastian College Gym in Cavite City.

"I'm confident every time Alex is in there," said Montaña coach Robert Sison. "He provides leadership and he's like my extension on the court."

Aside from Compton, the Jewels will also turn to Jon Dan Salvador, Ariel Capus and Al Magpayo in their bid for a third straight win.

The Magnolia-FEU Wizards try to keep the No. 2 slot when they shoot for their sixth straight win at 4 p.m. against the Welcoat Paint Masters.

Welcoat, which bowed to Magnolia-FEU in the finals in the last conference, slipped past the defending champions with an 80-79 double-overtime win in the first round.

The game will also feature an interesting matchup between two of the league's best rebounders—Magnolia's Arwind Santos and Welcoat rookie Anthony Washington.

Jasmine W. Payo

Patriots advance

LA SALLE-DASMARIÑAS cut loose in the second quarter as it waylaid Philippine Maritime Institute, 66-57, yesterday in the 12th National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament at the Pasay Sports Complex.

Haddi Porto and Naches Hasanon showed the way for the Dasmariñas Patriots, who earned the first quarterfinals slot in Group B with their sixth win in seven matches.

Emilio Aguinaldo College prevailed over Olivarez College, 82-67, with Ronjay Buenafe unloading a game-high 24 points in the other game.

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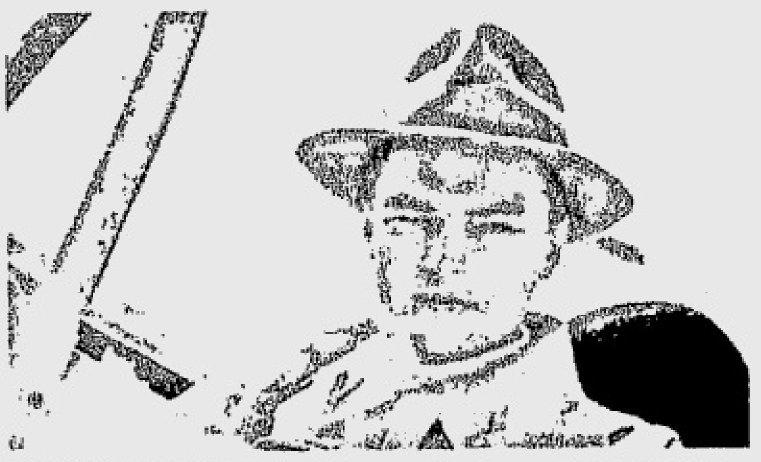
Leo DiCaprio flies high again

By Nestor U. Torre



"THE AVIATOR." Perfect challenge and showcase for the ambitious thespian.

DICAPRIO WITH KATE WINSLET. The best offers came after "Titanic."

WHEN "Titanic" set box-office records that have yet to be broken, its male lead player, Leonardo DiCaprio, zoomed up Hollywood's stellar escalator—all the way to the top. .

It looked then that he could do no wrong, and producers jostled each other as they offered him the best projects which they hoped would benefit from his newly-established superstardom.

Alas, the next few years saw Leo's high-flying star lose its luster and crash to the ground. Most of his new vehicles were ill-advised, with the happy exception of "Catch Me If You Can."

DiCaprio never became a has-been, but his career was clearly in trouble. Something big and good had to happen to it, or he would be completely upstaged by upstarts like Matt Damon and Jude Law.

Savior

Who would help Leo at this iffy period in his career? It has turned out that Leo's savior is no one else but—Leo himself.

For years now, he has been trying to get producers interested in bankrolling a film on the awesomely eventful life of producer Howard Hughes, with DiCaprio playing the movie mogul. But, the project didn't catch fire, because it was felt early on that the actor was too young for the role.

After an interval of more than five years, however, Leo matured sufficiently to play Hughes with the requisite texture and heft. Still, the project wasn't hot—until he got ace director Martin Scorsese interested in making the film.

With Scorsese on board, the Hughes movie was suddenly a "go," and DiCaprio gave it everything he had. The result: Seen in preview, the film, "The Aviator," has reaped plaudits, and DiCaprio's stellar career is flying high again.

The Hughes movie has been titled "The Aviator" in reference to the producer's other "career" as an inventor, specifically of the biggest airplane in the world in the 1950s.

Romantic exploits

It could also have been titled "The Lover," because Hughes' romantic exploits were similarly celebrated. It wasn't simply because he was a producer that he squired the most beautiful and famous female stars around. He was tall, goodlooking and moodily charismatic, exuding power and danger—a heady combination that had an aphrodisiac effect on some women.

Beyond the glitz and glamour, however, Howard Hughes is a dream role for any actor because he eventually turns neurotic and obsessive, and that downward character arc is the perfect challenge and showcase for any ambitious thespian to show off his acting chops.

True enough, DiCaprio's performance in "The Aviator" is now being touted as Oscar-worthy. And some reviewers hail him as "one of the three or four best film actors today."

Heady praise

That's heady praise for Leo, who's had his share of low blows in his career. But all that's in the past now, as "The Aviator" is poised to take his stellar career to even greater heights.

KIDMAN. Fragility and icy detachment.

NOW SHOWING

Irresistible treats from Kidman, Wong and Miike

By Rito P. Asilo

"Birth"

D: Jonathan Glazer
S: Nicole Kidman, Lauren Bacall

IN Jonathan Glazer's sophisticated albeit broodingly morose "Kubrikian" drama, the director poses confounding questions about love and mortality, and explores the plausibility—and absurdity—of reincarnation and metaphysical romance.

After a decade of grieving over the death of her husband Sean, Anna (Nicole Kidman) is visited by a 10-year-old boy (Cameron Bright) who claims to be the reincarnation of her departed husband—just when she decides to get on with her life, by announcing her engagement to her fiancé.

Anna is understandably skeptical. But, when Sean unravels details that only she and her dead husband knew about, she starts to take him seriously—and even her deep love for Sean comes raging back into her consciousness. Is romantic love possible between a thirtysomething woman and a 10-year-old boy?

Be forewarned, though: The movie is not for everyone, but the cerebral director's film, redolent with intimations of Francois Ozon's numbingly touching "Under the Sand" (France), Roger Michell's disturbing "The Mother" (UK), or Nanni Moretti's wistful "The Son's Room" (Italy), about grief and loneliness after the death of a loved one, is thoughtful, provocative and, yes, intriguing—no thanks to the controversial bathtub scene between Anna and Sean which, to be fair, Glazer handles with delicate care.

The film largely owes its aesthetic heft and gravitas to the prolific Kidman, who inhabits her complex character's being by combining fragility and icy detachment. But, its technical merits are nothing to scoff at, either—most notably, Harris Savides' moody cinematography and Alexandre Desplat's violin-rich musical score.

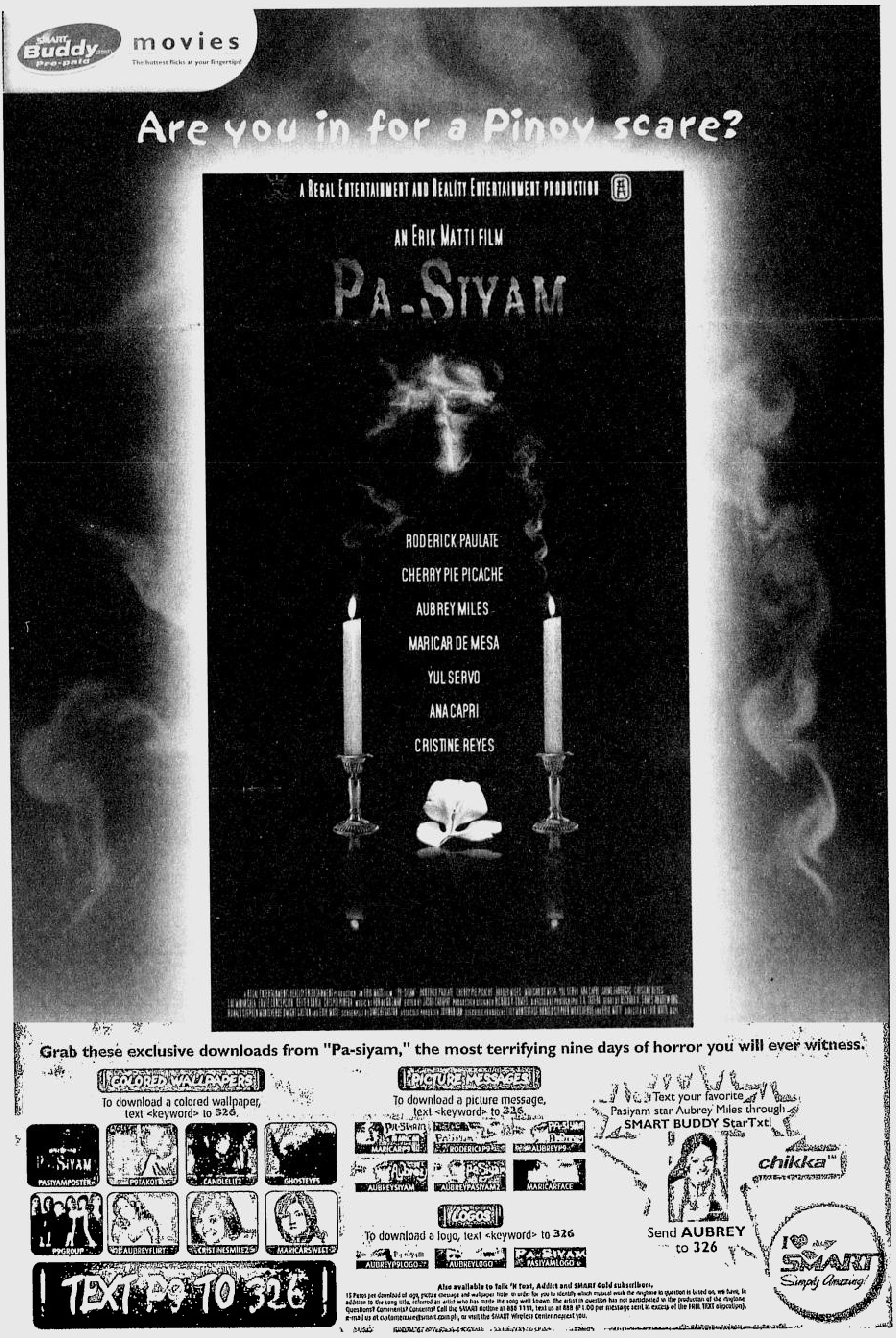
The film's power comes to the fore when it unsettlingly reminds us of confusing moments in our lives when we have to make difficult choices—especially where matters of the heart are concerned. And we know that *that* is never an easy choice!

"2046"

D: Wong Kar Wai
S: Tony Leung, Gong Li, Zhang Ziyi, Maggie Cheung

If you haven't seen Wong Kar Wai's heartbreakingly beautiful "In The Mood for Love," it may take you awhile to get into the narrative groove of this slightly less successful but nevertheless

IRRESISTIBLE/ A2-2



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ALEXANDER MTRCB RATING: R13
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BRIDGET JONES 2 MTRCB Rating: PG 13
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ONE MISSED CALL MTRCB RATING: R 13
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GEORGE OF THE DRAGON SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING
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THE POLAR EXPRESS MTRCB Rating: G
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Visayan actors return to their roots in 'Panaghoy sa Suba'

By Remy M. Umerez

AMONG the entries in this year's Metro Manila Film Festival, "Panaghoy Sa Suba" ("Call of the River") is considered a major feat because of its brave attempt to revive interest in Visayan movies.

Producer Cesar Montano, a Boholano, has long wanted to do a period romance set against the raging flow of the Loboc river, a tourist attraction in his hometown. He was so fascinated by the river that he came up with a storyline from which the screenplay of Cris Vertido was born.

Originally, it was the Pasig river during the Japanese occupation that was Cesar's choice for the location shoot, but the river is now polluted.

MONTANO. Dream come true.

Research

The dialogue used in "Panaghoy" is 85 percent Cebuano, 10 percent English and five percent Japanese. Research studies show that 70 percent of the moviegoing public understands Bisaya. During the film's running time of 129 minutes, English subtitles are utilized for non-Visayan viewers and foreigners, as well. "Panaghoy Sa Suba" is geared for international release—thanks to Cesar's Hollywood connections.

With the exception of Daria Ramirez, most of the major players in the film are Visayan. For Caridad Sanchez, Joel Torre, Ronnie Lazaro, Suzette Ranillo and Flora Gasser, "Panaghoy" means a return to their roots.

Materialistic mother

Sanchez portrays the materialistic mother who only wants the best in life for her daughter (Juliana Palermo). She used to be a big star in Visayan films, where Suzette's parents (Gloria Sevilla and Mat Ranillo) reigned as queen and king.

A major investor in "Panaghoy" is Japanese actor Jackie Woo, who plays a Japanese officer, one of the suitors of Iset (Palermo).

Irresistible treats from Kidman . . .

From page A2-1

triumphant sequel.

But, whether you like world cinema or not, Wong's gorgeously shot, poetic movies ("Happy Together," "Chungking Express," "Days of Being Wild") are must-sees for film lovers because of their instructive innovations in storytelling and technical savvy.

His productions' incandescent, color-draped scenes that ooze with silently raging emotional tension set the tone of his stories. A smoke-filled room can convey dramatic intensity that can leave audiences breathless.

In "2046," Wong follows Chow's (Leung) "adventures" as an erotic novelist after his love affair with a married woman (Maggie Cheung) in "In the Mood for Love" leaves him a lonely, broken man. He dips into romantic dalliances and flings with various women (Zhang Ziyi, Gong Li, Carina Lau) as he writes a science-fiction tale that takes his audiences into the future. But, for him, writing about the future is really an expression of anguished longing for a romantic past that will forever haunt his memories.

BLOOM. Underwritten character.

"Ned Kelly"

D: Gregor Jordan
S: Heath Ledger, Orlando Bloom, Naomi Watts

Based on Robert Drew's novel, "Our Sunshine," this film is about the life and times of 19th century Australian icon Ned Kelly (Heath Ledger) and his four-man gang, who robbed banks, hijacked an entire town for three days—and distributed the loot to the townsfolk.

The film tells the cautionary tale of a society in chaos and desperation, where people rejoice when their "Robin Hood" comes to air grievances through criminal upheavals. It has efficient actors—led by Ledger, Orlando Bloom and Naomi Watts—who suffer from moderately sympathetic but underwritten characters.

"One Missed Call"

D: Takashi Miike
S: Kou Shibasaki, Hiroshi Yamashita

Think about this: You receive a missed call—and it's not from Chris Evans out to rescue you from the bad guys (spooky ghouls are not his thing), but from your own phone number.

Then, you hear an eerie recording of your voice just seconds before you die. The call is passed on to a person whose name is found in your cell phone's directory. How do you stop the vicious cycle before your time runs out?

Familiar? Miike ("Audition," "Visitor Q") tweaks unapologetically rehashed scenarios—but this time, he uses cell phones instead of videotapes (as in Hideo Nakata's "Ring" series) to dramatize the horrors of child abuse.

The plot is predictable, and character development is non-existent, but the last 40 minutes of the film provides a hefty serving of dismembered limbs that creep, crawl and grab their victims.

One "happily" petrified viewer said: "*Pinupulikat na ako sa takot!*" Enough said.

LEUNG. Plays an erotic novelist in "2046."

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Soho's 'Kapuso Mo' needs lighter approach

By Noelani Torre

SOHO. Hasn't really changed her on-camera persona.

ACCORDING to GMA-7, its new show, "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho," features "the lighter side" of its host. The network has long made much of Jessica's achievements in investigative journalism (as member of the team that won the George Foster Peabody award, as the first Pinoy to win at the New York Film Festival for Coverage of a Breaking Story, etc.), and there's no denying the fact that she's one hot property. It's not surprising then that the network has found another way to market her to the public.

"Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho" is supposed to show us "someone whom the viewers can cry, laugh, and share their stories with." When we watched an episode recently, however, we noticed that the program host hasn't really changed her persona. She's still the same Jessica Soho that you can see in the more "serious" shows, and the fact that she's tackling more trivial topics in "Kapuso Mo" makes for a rather disjointed viewing experience.

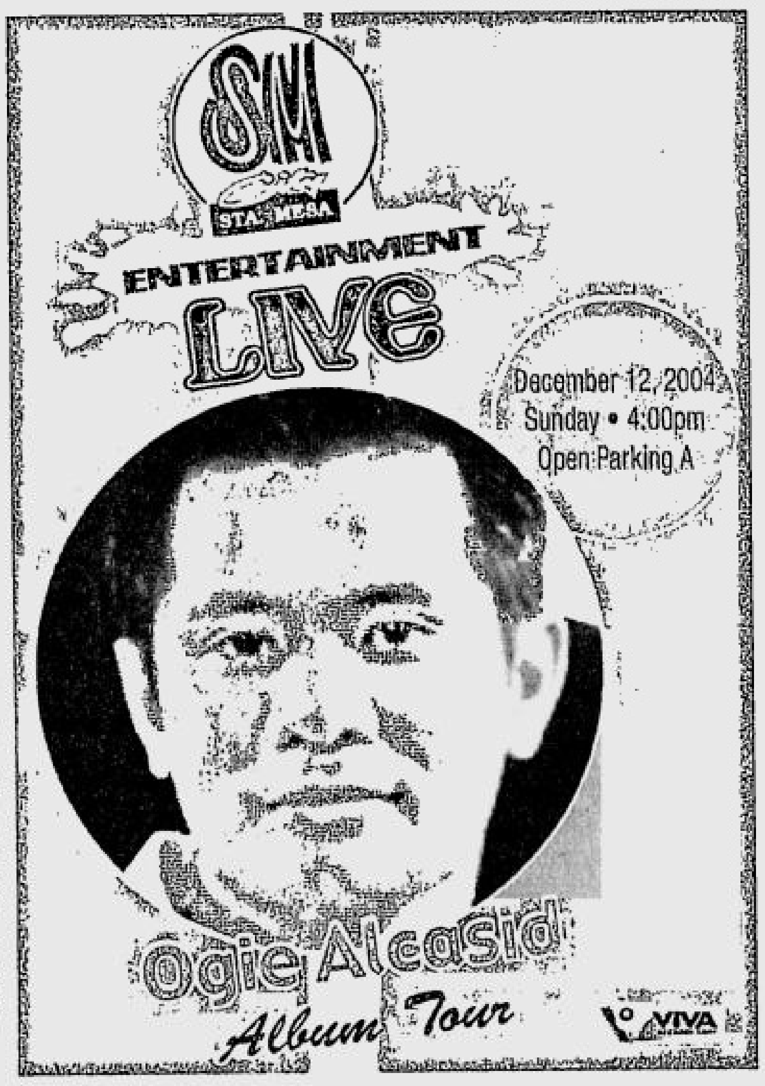
Experiment

She treats her topic—in this episode's instance, *tsismis*—with a misplaced seriousness. "*Totoo ba ang tsismis?*" was the episode's title, and we watched her interviewing Bongbong Marcos and Lolit Solis, visiting Baclaran neighborhoods and a town in Iloilo, and conducting an "experiment" at Quezon City beauty salons.

A little wit wouldn't have been out of place here, but this is what Jessica lacks. The result is somewhat stodgy storytelling that lends severity to a show that hardly needs it.

Though unified in its subject matter, we nevertheless found the show to be on the thin side. The topic itself is ephemeral in the first place, and it wasn't explored enough. Among the famous *tsismis* mentioned were the *sawa* supposedly residing in the basement of a department store (though she didn't pursue this particular old *chika*),

SOHO'S/ A2-4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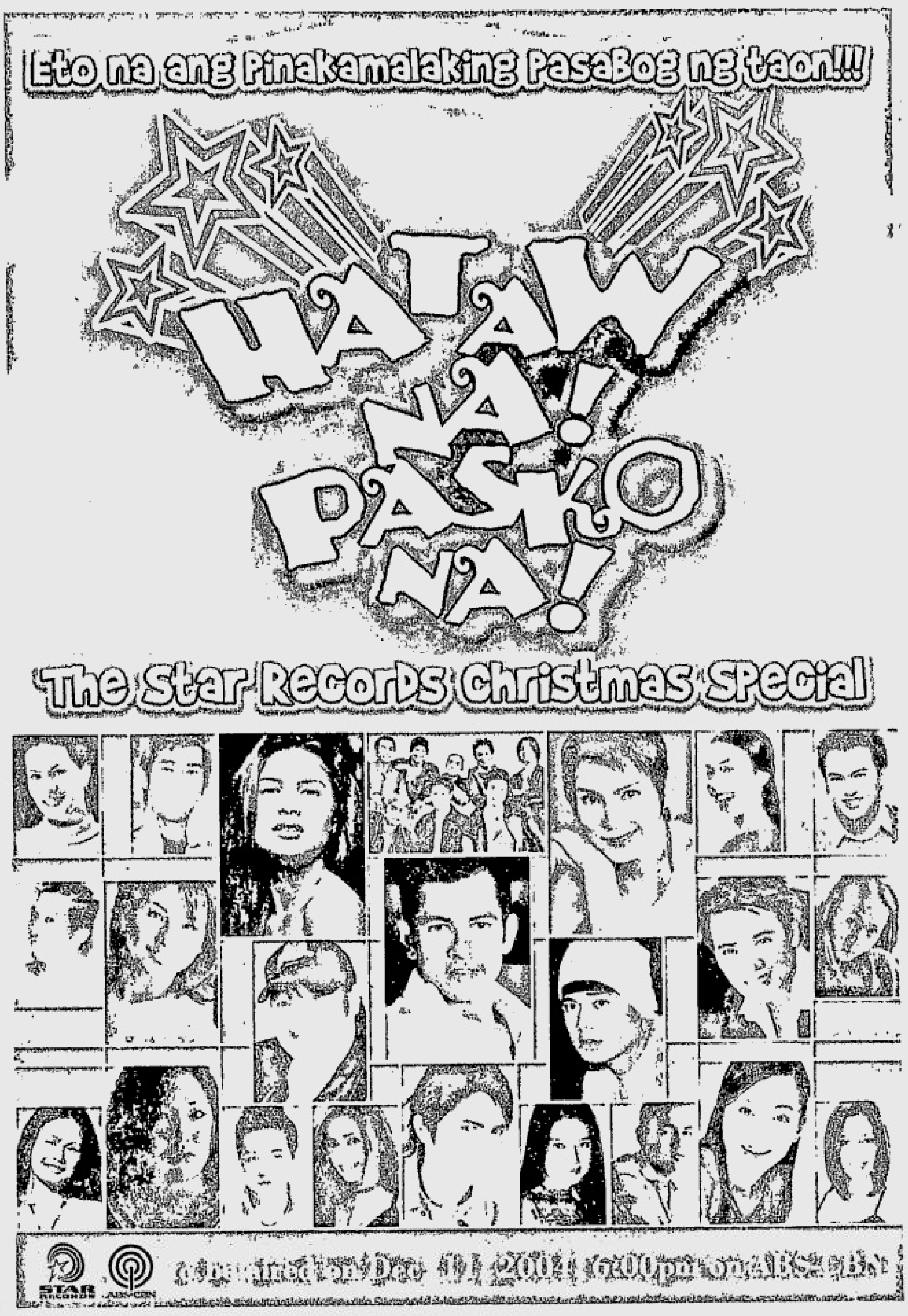
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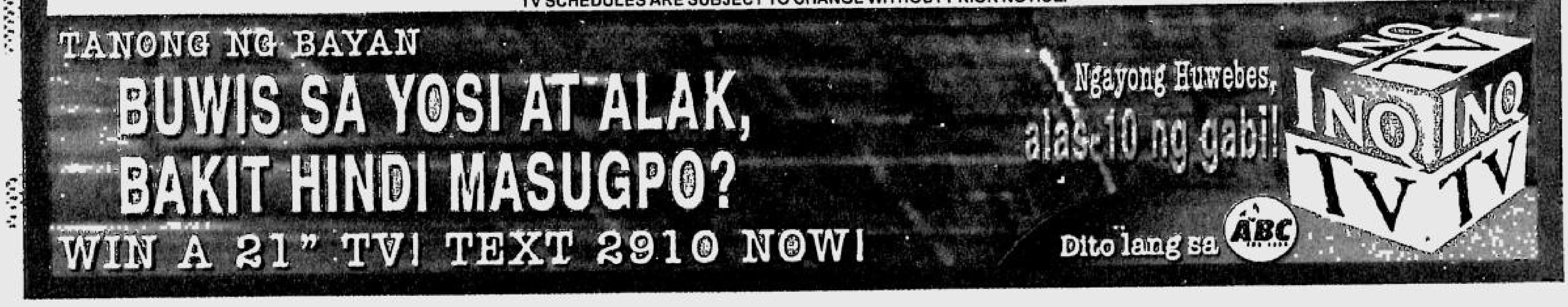
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Soho's . . .

From page A2-3

SOLIS. Brashly unrepentant.

Bongbong Marcos' double—and Jose Rizal as the father of Adolf Hitler!

Infamous

The show ventured into the seemingly *chismoso*-rich neighborhoods of Baclaran, where the residents proudly proclaimed themselves "*reyna(s) ng tsismis*." They also took a trip to a town in Iloilo, infamous for being populated with *aswangs*. Jessica interviewed the granddaughter of one *Tenyente* Gimo, the person who appears to have caused all the *tsismis*. That segment ended with a group of kids shouting an obviously rehearsed "*Hindi kami aswang!*" line.

There was also a half-hearted attempt at an experiment wherein the show went into beauty parlors and grilled employees there about whatever gossipy tidbits they knew.

The interview with Lolit Solis was livelier. Solis has had at least half a dozen libel cases filed against her, and though she may say that she's also had regrets, she remains brashly unrepentant.

All in all, though the show is well-organized, we feel that it would benefit greatly from a lighter approach and more varied material.

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12.20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
4 NED KELLY
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 BIRTH
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
6 NATIONAL TREASURE
10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
7 TWO BROTHERS
11:40 1:55 4:10 6:25 9:40
8 PA-SIYAM
12:40 3:00 5::20 7:40 10:00
9 THE INCREDIBLES
ONE MISSED CALL
10 BRIDGET JONES 2
12:10 2:40 5:10 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON 10:20 12:15 2:10 4:05 6:00 7.55 9:50
2 THE INCREDIBLES
ONE MISSED CALL
3 THE POLAR EXPRESS
2046
4 PA-SIYAM
10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
5 RESERVE
6 NED KELLY
11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:15 10:00
7 BIRTH
10:15 12:15 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:25 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 BCUZ OF U
10.20 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
2 ALEXANDER
10.55 2:20 5:45 9:10
3 BRIDGET JONES 2
10:55 1:25 3:55 6:25 9:00
4 SEED OF CHUCKY
10:50 12:50 2.50 4:50 6:50 9:00
5 BIRTH
12.30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
6 NATIONAL TREASURE
10:55 1:50 4:45 7:40 10:30
7 ONE MISSED CALL
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40 10:30
8 PA-SIYAM
11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-2229/31

1 ALEXANDER
10.40 1:50 5:00 8:15
2 NATIONAL TREASURE
10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
3 HELLWOLF
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
4 SYLVIA
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
5 BCUZ OF U
10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
6 THE POLAR EXPRESS
10:45 1:05 3:30 5:55 8:20
7 SEED OF CHUCKY
11.00 1:00 3:00 5.00 7:00 8:55
8 THE INCREDIBLES
10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30

PIONEER 887-6378

1 ALEXANDER
2 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
3 NATIONAL TREASURE
4 NED KELLY

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-276

1 SAW
2 SEED OF CHUCKY
3 BCUZ OF U
4 NAKAW NA SANDALI

CAINTA 240-488

1 NATIONAL TREASURE
2 ALEXANDER
3 PA-SIYAM
4 SEED OF CHUCKY

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TWO BROTHERS

What's Happening

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MTRCB Rating: G

STA ROSA (049) 837-0807

1 THE POLAR EXPRESS
2 PA-SIYAM
3 OUT OF REACH
4 THE GHOST
5 BRIDGET JONES 2

LIPA (043) 757-3664 / (043) 312-5870

1 OUT OF REACH
2 THE GHOST
3 CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS
4 THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE
5 NATIONAL TREASURE

DASMARINAS (046) 852-[illegible] / (046) 416-4335

1 SAW
2 BRIDGET JONES 2
3 ALEXANDER
4 TAXI
5 CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS

ANGELES (045) 892-2248

1 THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE
2 PA-SIYAM
3 FIRST DAUGHTER
4 CELLULAR

IMUS (046) 875-3838 / (046) 471-4188

1 BRIDGET JONES 2
2 CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS
3 PA-SIYAM
4 NATIONAL TREASURE
5 DARKNESS
6 SALAT

STARMILLS (045) 875-1027 / (045) 961-5270

1 THE GRUDGE
2 PA-SIYAM
3 FIRST DAUGHTER
4 NATIONAL TREASURE
5 ALEXANDER
6 CELLULAR

BACOLOD (034) 44-[illegible] / (034) 4[illegible]

1 AFTER THE SUNSET
2 PA-SIYAM
3 NATIONAL TREASURE
4 BEFORE SUNSET
5 SAW
6 ALEXANDER

ILOILO (033) [illegible]

1 NATIONAL TREASURE
2 WHITE CHICKS
3 AFTER THE SUNSET
4 THE POLAR EXPRESS
5 THE GRUDGE
6 BRIDGET JONES 2

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E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 BIRTH
10:50, 1:15, 3:45, 6:15
8:45, 11:15
R-13

2 BRIDGET JONES DIARY 2
10:30, 12:50, 3:20,
5:50, 8:20, 10:50
PG-13

3 NATIONAL TREASURE
11:30, 1:05, 3:40
6:15, 8:50, 11:25
GP

4 2046
11:55, 2:45, 5:35
8:25, 11:10
R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ALEXANDER R13 12:30,3:40,6:50,10:00	NATIONAL TREASURE GP 12:10,2:40,5:10,7:40,10:10	BRIDGET JONES PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10
THE INCREDIBLES GP 12:10,2:40,5:10 ONE MISSED CALL R13 7:40,10:00	POLAR EXPRESS GP 12:35,2:50,5:05 2046 R13 7:20,9:50	NED KELLY PG13 12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20

MATINEE SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 P.M. - P80.00 - MON. - FRI.

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star group of cinemas movie guide

IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

starmall EDSA-SHAW
Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Saw
4 Alexander
5 Salat sa Ligaya

METROPOLIS ALABANG star
Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Birth
2 Salat sa Ligaya
3 Pa-Siyam
4 Bcuz of U
5 Alexander
6 National Treasure

starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. No. 873.50 04
1 The Incredibles
2 Ginger Snaps 2

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1
2046
10:25, 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:35
R13

CINEMA 2
BIRTH
11:35, 1:55, 4:15, 6:35, 8:55
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
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SHANG CINEPLEX

① POLAR EXPRESS (GP)
FS 10:45AM 3:15PM LMF 7:45PM
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (GP)
FS 1:00PM, 5:30PM LMF 10:00PM

② BRIDGET JONES (EDGE OF REASON)
FS 11:45AM 2:15PM 4:45PM,
7:15PM, LMF 9:45PM (PG-13)

③ GEORGE & THE DRAGON
FS 11:35AM, 2:00PM, 4:25PM,
6:50PM LMF 9:15PM (GP)

④ 2046
FS 10:40AM, 1:30PM 4:20PM,
7:10PM LMF 10:00PM (R-13)

PREMIERE THEATRE
NATIONAL TREASURE (GP)
FS 11:20AM,2PM,4:40PM,7:20PM,LMF 10:00PM

Regular Ticket Prices
Cinema 1 to 4 - P150
Premiere Theatre - P250
(includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)

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For more details, please see film listing at the Shang Cineplex ticket booths or call 633-2227 or 633-7851 local 171.

Promo Period December 1-24, 2004 Per DTI-NCR Permit No A3-841, Series of 2004

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT

NOW OPEN!
Gateway Cineplex 10

1 POLAR EXPRESS
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
2 NATIONAL TREASURE
11:50 2:20 5:00 7:40 10:20
3 ALEXANDER
2:10 5:40 9:10
4 BRIDGET JONES
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:10
5
6
7
8
9
10

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3 ALEXANDER
11:15 2:30 5:45 9:00
4 BRIDGET JONES
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
5 ONE MISSED CALL
11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
6 PA SIYAM
11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
7 BCUZ OF U
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:20

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ARANETA COLISEUM

Dec. 12 RED BULL vs. COKE
Dec. 15 FEDEX vs. SLR
Dec. 25 DISNEY ON ICE 1pm/4:30pm/8pm
Dec. 26 DISNEY ON ICE 2pm/6pm
Dec. 27 DISNEY ON ICE 2pm/6pm
Dec. 28 DISNEY ON ICE 6pm

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	SALAT SA LIGAYA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	SALAT SA LIGAYA
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1,2,3 & 4	POLAR EXPRESS-XMAS W/ KRANKS BRIDGET JONES GEORGE & D DRAGON 2046
PREMIERE THEATRE	NATIONAL TREASURE

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HELL WOLF
CINEMA-2	SALAT
CINEMA-3	SEED OF CHUCKY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	POLAR EXPRESS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-6	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-7	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-8	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	NATIONAL TREASURE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ALEXANDER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ONE MISSED CALL
CINEMA-12	BIRTH
CINEMA-14	PASIYAM
CINEMA-15	BCUZ OF U

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	SECRET WINDOW
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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'Bunso' affirms Carolino's reputation as topnotch docu filmmaker

By Nestor U. Torre

CAROLINO. Natural handling of young subjects.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINE LOOS

OUR best documentary filmmaker, Ditsi Carolino, recently screened her new documentary, "Bunso," at the UP Film Theater. Viewers who thought that the movie was about cute little children got a rude awakening when they realized that the film's title in fact referred to the youngest convicts in a jail for adult prisoners in the Philippine south.

The docu sustains Ditsi's reputation as a world-class documentarist, as attested to by the awards and raves that her work has garnered abroad.

Plaudits

Like prophets and great artists who aren't recognized in their homeland, Ditsi first had to reap plaudits internationally before her countrymen came around to grudgingly acknowledge her excellence.

For our part, we became instant Ditsi Carolino appreciator way back in the early '90s, when we judged a CCP short film and video competition in which one of her first documentaries, about children in Smokey Mountain, was one of the entries.

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We were pleasantly surprised when we viewed Ditsi's Smokey Mountain film. It stood head and shoulders above the other entries, and was clearly a winner.

It impressed us with its wide shots of Smokey Mountain at night, a difficult setting to light, especially with the minimal equipment that young documentarists usually have to work with.

More than its technical proficiency and daring, however, the film's heart was what struck us most. Like other documentarists, Ditsi tried hard to be objective in her presentation, but her sensitivity clearly showed in her footage, imbuing it with affecting, empathetic insights, while neither diluting nor compromising her material.

Candid

But, Ditsi's best suit was her natural handling of her young subjects. The children in her Smokey Mountain film were candid and spontaneous, and didn't seem to be bothered by the presence of a camera and microphone.

This is a difficult feat to pull off, because many on-camera subjects tend to freeze up and thus hold back on their honest thoughts and feelings.

How did Ditsi avoid this trap? She confided to us that, when she entered a new environment for a docu, she first exposed her subjects to her camera and sound equipment for weeks before actually shooting any footage. Only after they got used to the equipment and in fact forgot that it was even there did she start really

'BUNSO'/A2-7

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 PA-SIYAM
2 (DTS) BRIDGET JONES
3 (DOLBY) OUT OF REACH
4 POLAR EXPRESS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 OUT OF REACH
2 (DOLBY) BRIDGET JONES
3 (DTS) POLAR EXPRESS
4 PA-SIYAM

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 FIRST DAUGHTER
2 BCUZ OF U
3 (DOLBY) NATIONAL TREASURE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) OUT OF REACH
2 TOOLBOX MURDER
3 (DTS) POLAR EXPRESS
4 PA-SIYAM
5 BRIDGET JONES

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 BCUZ OF U
2 SAW
3 (DTS) TAXI
4 (DOLBY) OUT OF REACH

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 DARKNESS
2 OUT OF REACH
3 SURVIVING CHRISTMAS
4 THE SIN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 SAW
2 FOREGOTTEN
3 (DOLBY) ALEXANDER
4 (DTS) POLAR EXPRESS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) CELLULAR
2 PA-SIYAM
3 (DTS ES) FIRST DAUGHTER
4 THE FOREGOTTEN

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 PA-SIYAM
2 CELLULAR
3 (DOLBY) THE FOREGOTTEN
4 (DTS) FIRST DAUGHTER

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 SURVIVING CHRISTMAS
2 SAW
3 (DOLBY) FOREGOTTEN
4 (DTS) NATIONAL TREASURE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SKY CAPTAIN
2 SHARK TALE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320
1 PA-SIYAM
2 ALEXANDER
3 (DOLBY) POLAR EXPRESS

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SM CINEMA movietime

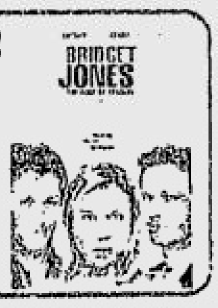
木村拓哉 TAKUYA KIMURA
王菲 FAYE WONG
王家衛 導演
A WONG KAR WAI FILM
2046
moviepickoftheWeek
2046

what to watch

ALEXANDER Subject to MTRCB RATING

SM Bacoor Cinema 3
SM Cebu Cinema 8
SM Marilao Cinema 4
SM Davao Cinema 2
SM Batangas Cinema 3
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 4

MTRCB Rating: PG 13 **BRIDGET JONES 2**



SM Batangas Cinema 4
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 2
SM Iloilo Cinema 5

CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS MTRCB Rating: G

SM Bacoor Cinema 2
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 3
SM Baguio Cinema 2

BUNNY GUARDS
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING
SM Pampanga Cinema 5

NATIONAL TREASURE

NATIONAL TREASURE
MTRCB Rating: G
SM Batangas Cinema 1
SM Bacoor Cinema 5
SM Davao Cinema 4
SM Iloilo Cinema 6
SM Cebu Cinema 6
SM Cagayan Cinema 1
SM Baguio Cinema 1
SM Pampanga Cinema 4
SM Lucena Cinema 2

THE POLAR EXPRESS
MTRCB RATING: G
SM Iloilo Cinema 3
SM Bacoor Cinema 8

SANTA SANTITA
MTRCB Rating: PG13
SM Bacoor Cinema 1

Movies are subject to change without prior notice • For complete movie schedule, visit www.smcinema.com

SeeMall!

AYALA CINEMAS THX
Movies/schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729-7777

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4		GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON	1 GEORGE & THE DRAGON	1 2046	5 THE POLAR EXPRESS	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 NATIONAL TREASURE	1 THE FORGOTTEN
2 NATIONAL TREASURE	2 PASIYAM	2 NATIONAL TREASURE	6 BIRTH	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 BRIDGET JONES THE EDGE OF REASON	2 SURVIVING CHRISTMAS
3 ALEXANDER	3 BIRTH	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON	7 ALEXANDER	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 2046	3 CELLULAR
4 2046	4 NATIONAL TREASURE	4 ONE MISSED CALL		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 BIRTH	4 TAXI
5 BIRTH				GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE INCREDIBLES	5 FIRST DAUGHTER

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
2 BIRTH

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
ISUZU CAR EXHIBIT December 6 to 12 2004	ALADDIN & JASMINE GETS STARSTRUCK December 10 to 12, 2004	ROYAL OAKS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM December 11, 2004

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 2	GREENBELT 3
GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES featuring FIRST CIRCLE December 11, 7:00pm to 10:00pm	CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT GREENBELT 3 U.P. Singing Ambassadors (Dec. 11), U.P. Concert Chorus (Dec. 12)

Onstage
REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents THE WIZARD OF OZ
at REP's GLOBE THEATER - November 13 to December 19, 2004

Ayala MUSEUM
Visit the New Ayala Museum located beside Greenbelt 4 along Makati Avenue.
For inquiries, please call 757-7117

Stargazing at the Glorietta 1
AYALA CINEMAS

Meet & Greet the stars of
SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

December 27, 2004
4:00 PM
GLORIETTA 1 CINEMA LOBBY

Also featured in
MARKETI MARKETI ACTIVITY CENTER
December 12, 2004
5:30 PM

The movie SPIRIT OF THE GLASS opens December 25 in Ayala Cinemas.

Special Thanks to Canary Films & Octoarts Films

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES
and the CITY OF MAKATI
in cooperation with
Globe
directed by
Baby Barredo
present
The Wizard of Oz
by Frank Baum
November 13 to December 19, 2004
Greenbelt 1, Makati City

Aladdin & Jasmine Get Starstruck!
featuring:
Mark Herras & Jennylyn Mercado
Rainier Castillo & Yasmien Kurdi
Directed by Freddie Santos

ALADDIN & JASMINE GET STARSTRUCK
SHOW SCHEDULE:

AYALA CENTER MAKATI
Dec 2 & 3 - 6:30pm
Dec 4 & 5 - 11:30am, 3pm & 6pm
Glorietta Activity Center
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Text your comments: 0917-6095900

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Dec 10 - 5pm
Dec 11 - 3pm & 6 pm
Dec 12 - 11am, 3pm & 6pm
Activity Center
Customer Service Hotlines: 842-2782 & 772-1860

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Dec 18 - 11am, 4pm & 7:30pm
Dec 19 - 11:30am, 3pm & 6:30pm
Activity Center
Customer Service Hotline: (032) 231-5342 loc 324

Globe
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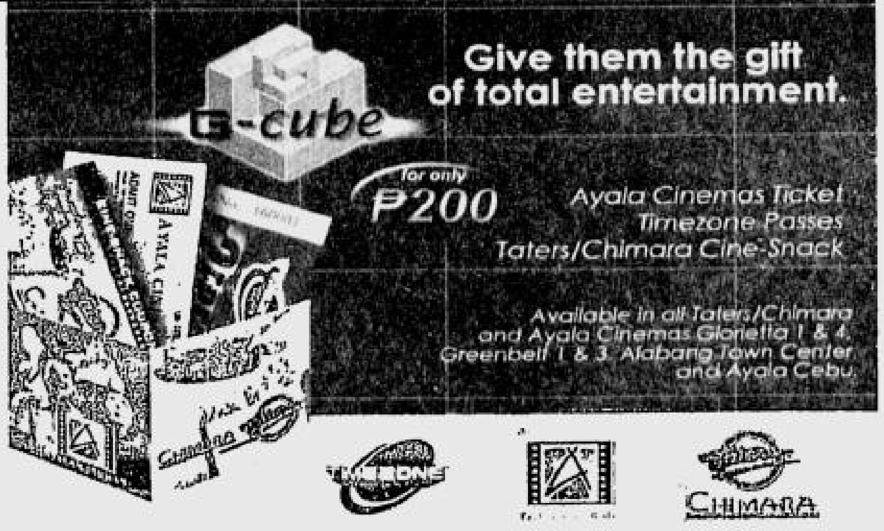

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AYALA CENTER
ALABANG TOWN
AYALA CENTER CEBU
LoveMall!

'Bunso' affirms Carolino's reputation as topnotch docu filmmaker

By Nestor U. Torre

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1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3 (DTS)	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7303

1	PA-SIYAM
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3 (DOLBY)	OUT OF REACH
4	POLAR EXPRESS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

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2 (DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONES
3 (DTS)	POLAR EXPRESS
4	PA-SIYAM

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	FIRST DAUGHTER
2	BCUZ OF U
3 (DOLBY)	NATIONAL TREASURE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	OUT OF REACH
2	TOOLBOX MURDER
3 (DTS)	POLAR EXPRESS
4	PA-SIYAM
5	BRIDGET JONES

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	BCUZ OF U
2	SAW
3 (DTS)	TAXI
4 (DOLBY)	OUT OF REACH

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	DARKNESS
2	OUT OF REACH
3	SURVIVING CHRISTMAS
4	THE SIN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1	SAW
2	FOREGOTTEN
3 (DOLBY)	ALEXANDER
4 (DTS)	POLAR EXPRESS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	CELLULAR
2	PA-SIYAM
3 (DTS EX)	FIRST DAUGHTER
4	THE FOREGOTTEN

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

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2	CELLULAR
3 (DOLBY)	THE FOREGOTTEN
4 (DTS)	FIRST DAUGHTER

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

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2	SAW
3 (DOLBY)	FOREGOTTEN
4 (DTS)	NATIONAL TREASURE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	SKY CAPTAIN
2	SHARK TALE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320

1	PA-SIYAM
2	ALEXANDER
3 (DOLBY)	POLAR EXPRESS

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王菲 FAYE WONG
王家衛導演
A WONG KAR WAI FILM
2046
moviepickoftheWeek
2046

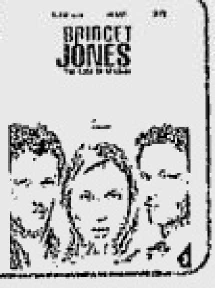
whattowatch

ALEXANDER Subject to MTRCB RATING

SM Bacoor Cinema 3
SM Cebu Cinema 8
SM Marilao Cinema 4
SM Davao Cinema 2
SM Batangas Cinema 3
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 4

MTRCB Rating: PG 13 **BRIDGET JONES 2**

SM Batangas Cinema 4
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 2
SM Iloilo Cinema 5



CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS MTRCB Rating: G

SM Bacoor Cinema 2
SM Dasmariñas Cinema 3
SM Baguio Cinema 2

BUNNY GUARDS
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING

SM Pampanga Cinema 5

NATIONAL TREASURE
MTRCB Rating G

SM Batangas Cinema 1
SM Bacoor Cinema 5
SM Davao Cinema 4
SM Iloilo Cinema 6
SM Cebu Cinema 6
SM Cagayan Cinema 1
SM Baguio Cinema 1
SM Pampanga Cinema 4
SM Lucena Cinema 2

THE POLAR EXPRESS
MTRCB RATING G

SM Iloilo Cinema 3
SM Bacoor Cinema 8

SANTA SANTITA
MTRCB Rating PG13

SM Bacoor Cinema 1

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THX 1	BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
2	NATIONAL TREASURE
3	ALEXANDER
4	2046
5	BIRTH

G1 GLORIETTA 1

1	GEORGE & THE DRAGON
2	PASIYAM
3	BIRTH
4	NATIONAL TREASURE

G4 GLORIETTA 4

1	2046
2	NATIONAL TREASURE
THX 3 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
4	ONE MISSED CALL
5	THE POLAR EXPRESS
6	BIRTH
7	ALEXANDER

GB1 GREENBELT 1

1	BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
2	BIRTH

GB3 GREENBELT 3

THX 1 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	NATIONAL TREASURE
THX 2 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON
3 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	2046
4 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	BIRTH
5 (GUARANTEED SEATS)	THE INCREDIBLES

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1	THE FORGOTTEN
2	SURVIVING CHRISTMAS
3	CELLULAR
4	TAXI
5	FIRST DAUGHTER

At the Activity Center

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GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES featuring FIRST CIRCLE December 11, 7:00pm to 10:00pm	CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT GREENBELT 3 U.P. Singing Ambassadors (Dec. 11), U.P. Concert Chorus (Dec. 12)

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SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

December 27, 2004
4:00 PM
GLORIETTA 1 CINEMA LOBBY

Also featured in
MARKETI MARKETI ACTIVITY CENTER
December 12, 2004
5:30 PM

The movie SPIRIT OF THE GLASS opens December 25 in Ayala Cinemas.

Special Thanks to Canary Films & Octoarts Films

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in cooperation with
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directed by
Baby Barredo
present
The Wizard of Oz
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November 13 to December 19, 2004
Greenbelt 1
Makati City

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get Starstruck!
featuring:
Mark Herras & Jennylyn Mercado
Rainier Castillo & Yasmien Kurdi
Directed by Freddie Santos

ALADDIN & JASMINE GET STARSTRUCK
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Dec 11 - 3pm & 6 pm
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THEY WRITE THE SONGS

Vehnee Saturno writes tunes that Pinoys love to sing

By Andy Bais

VEHNEE Saturno is one of the country's most prolific songwriters and hitmakers. For 25 years, he has written more than 500 songs, over a hundred of them certified hits.

"Be My Lady," one of his two entries in the 1983 Metro Pop songwriting competition (sung by Pedrito Montaire) didn't get the judges' nod, but eventually became a "winner" when then newcomer Martin Nievera recorded it the following year.

SATURNO. Jumpstarted careers of his compositions' interpreters.

The song became Vehnee's first big hit and, to this day, has remained a sing-along favorite. "Be My Lady" also did wonders for Martin's career.

Grand prize

The former Xerox machine operator initially made waves as a songwriter when he won the grand prize in the 1982 edition of the Metropop with the heart-tugging "Isang Dakot," interpreted by Sonia Singson. He tried the same songwriting style the following year, and emerged first runner-up with Lerma de la Cruz' lung-busting "Ako'y Ako."

Unfortunately, both winning pieces were far from being commercial. *"Ang hirap nilang kantahin.* *tunog* festival *talaga, kaya hindi nagustuhan ng masa,"* Vehnee observes.

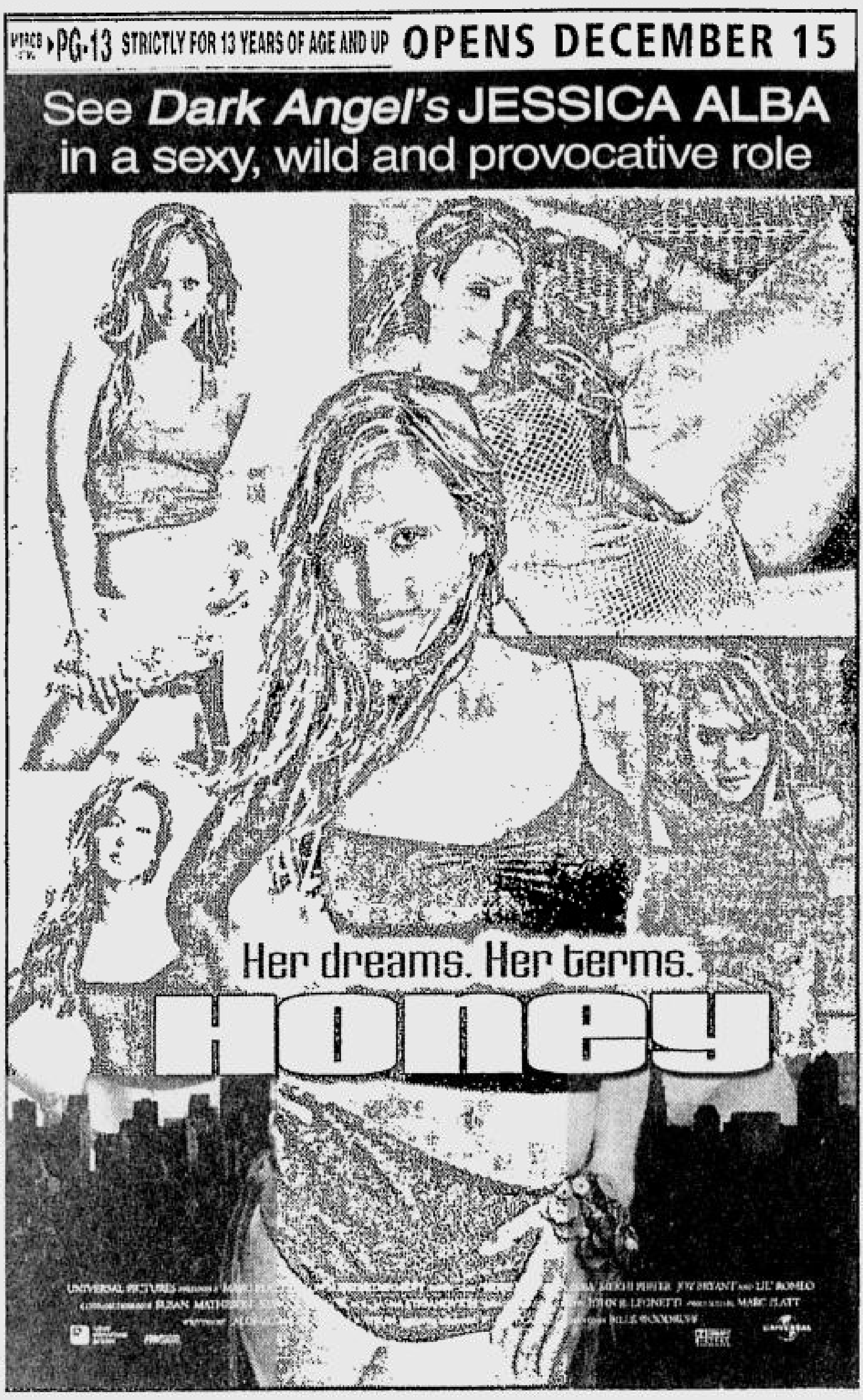
With the success of "Be My Lady," Vehnee finally found the style that would turn his compositions to gold or platinum hits that became instrumental in jumpstarting the careers of their interpreters.

Balladeer

Ariel Rivera became an overnight sensation with "Sana Kahit Minsan," Louie Heredia connected with the *masa* through "Nag-iisang Ikaw," and rocker Randy Santiago turned himself into a balladeer with "Para sa 'Yo."

Jaya wowed the judges with her Metropop grand prize-winning rendition of Danny Tan's "Sometimes You Just Know," but the soul

VEHNEE' A2-7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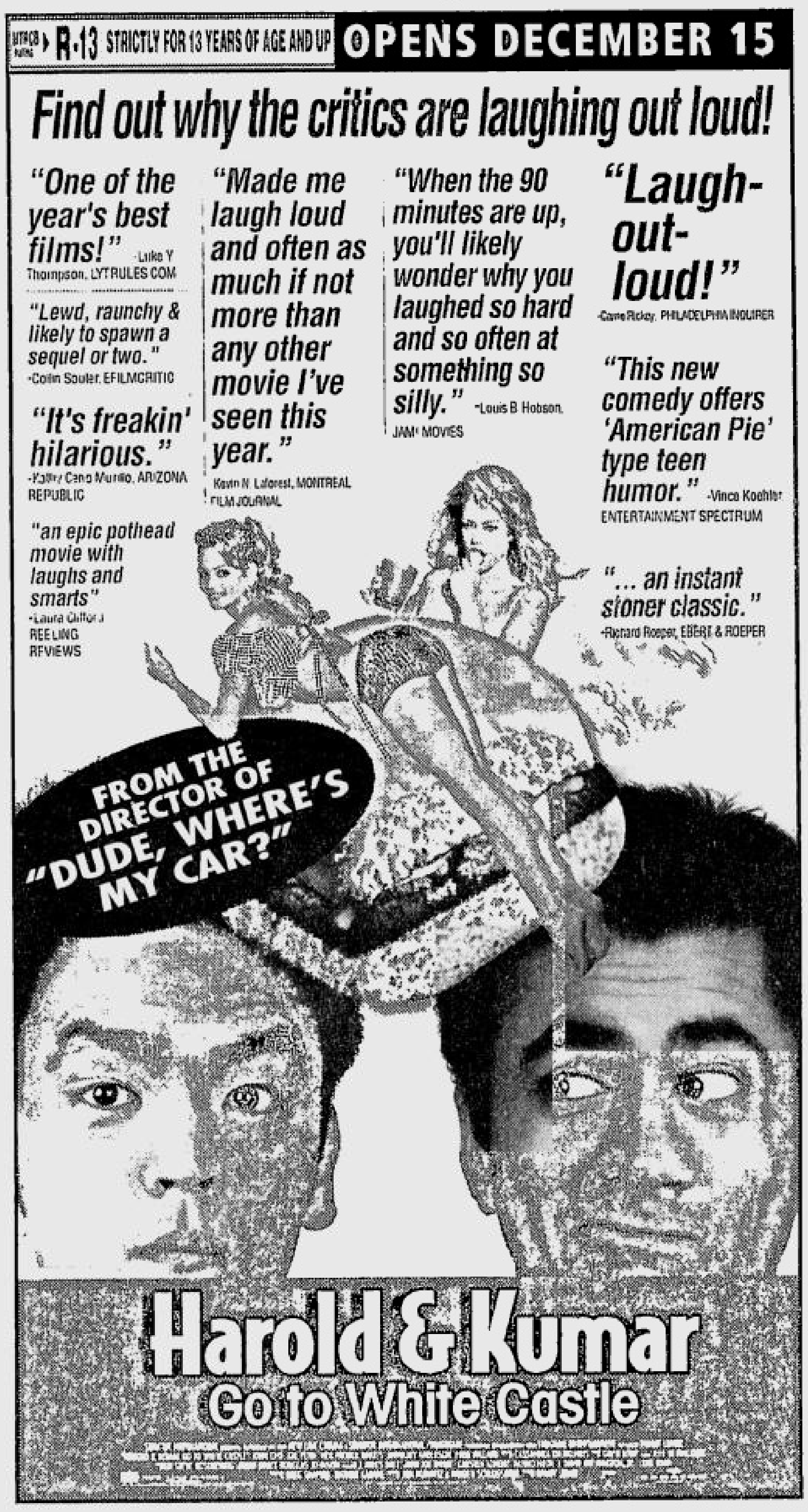
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"an epic pothead movie with laughs and smarts" -Laura Clifford REELING REVIEWS
"Made me laugh loud and often as much if not more than any other movie I've seen this year." Kevin N. Laforest, MONTREAL FILM JOURNAL
"When the 90 minutes are up, you'll likely wonder why you laughed so hard and so often at something so silly." -Louis B Hobson, JAM! MOVIES
"Laugh-out-loud!" -Carrie Rickey, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
"This new comedy offers 'American Pie' type teen humor." -Vince Koehler ENTERTAINMENT SPECTRUM
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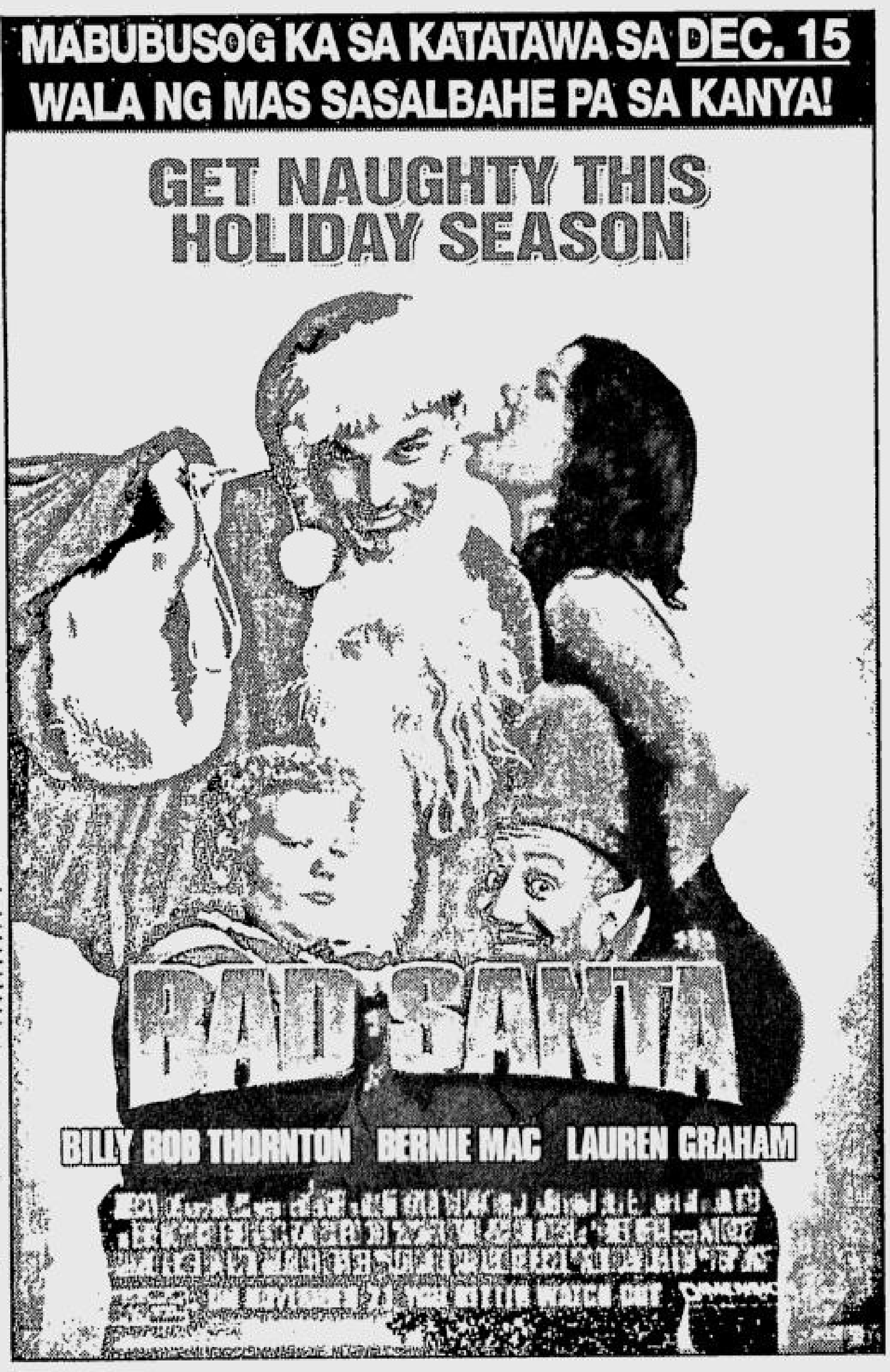
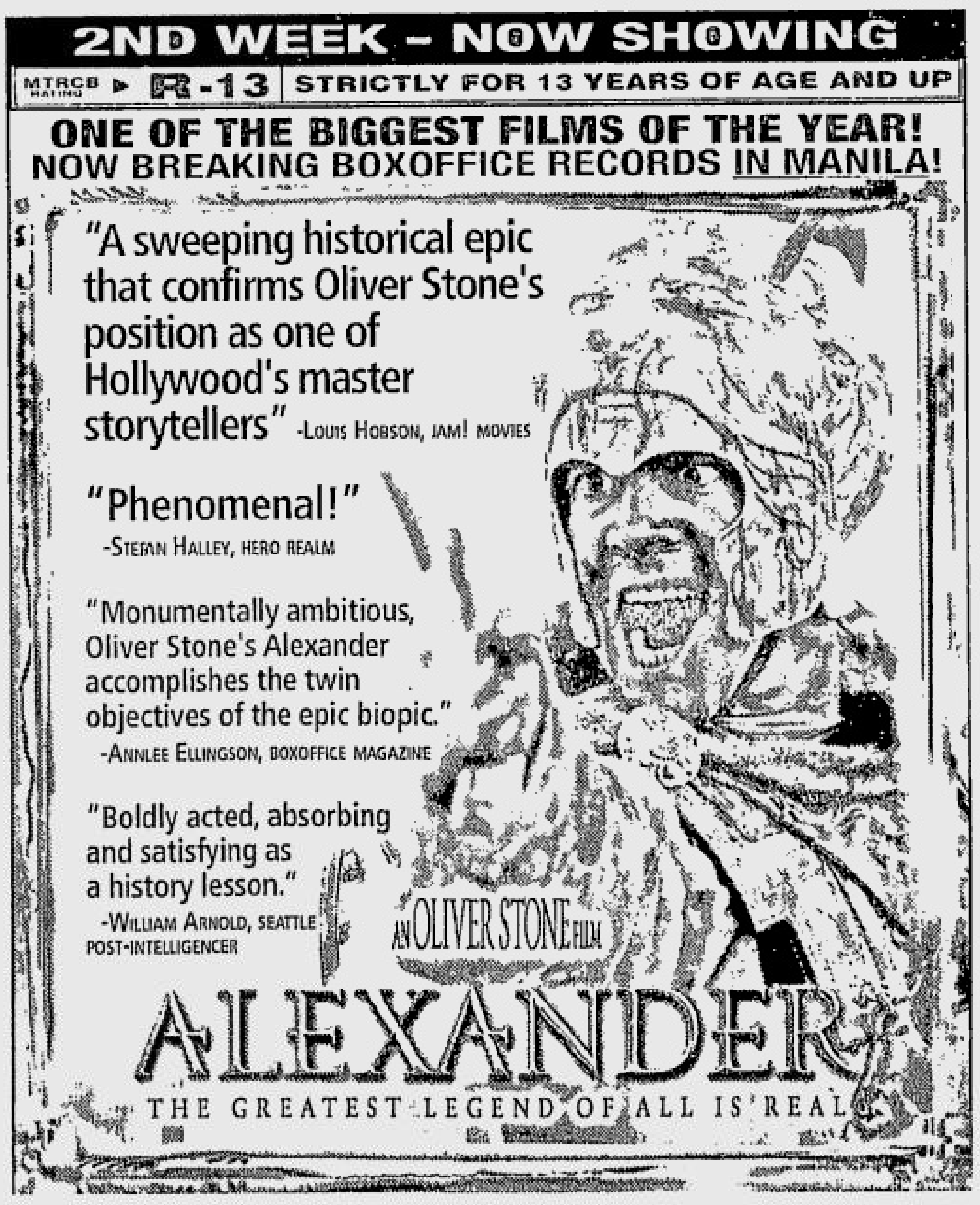
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR?"
Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle


MABUBUSOG KA SA KATATAWA SA DEC. 15
WALA NG MAS SASALBAHE PA SA KANYA!
GET NAUGHTY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
BAD SANTA
BILLY BOB THORNTON BERNIE MAC LAUREN GRAHAM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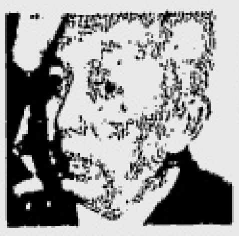
More onstage booboos recalled

By Behn Cervantes

(Conclusion)

TO make up for forgetting the lyrics to his song in the musical, "Interior #14," Vic Navasero decided to ad-lib. So, he paused (yes, dramatically) and proceeded with "Lah…lah…lah…lah" throughout what was supposed to be a life-altering number for my character!


MOLINA. Giggling fit.

For four minutes, he ad-libbed ferociously with full orchestral accompaniment. The more frustrated Vic got, the more empathically he shouted his lah-lahs! Members of the orchestra that included Lito Molina, Piding Alava and Angel Peña were initially agog, but were soon having a giggling fit.

And director Bobby Montelibano was pulling what was left of his crew-cut hair!

Great conviction

At the end of what seemed an eternity, a relieved Vic went back to his spoken line and asked me with great conviction: "Now, are you convinced?"

With such "convincing" arguments, I had to be, right? Lah lah!

In 1981, I directed a play about a farmer who, no longer able to accept agrarian injustice, goes to the mountains to join a revolutionary force. His wife, played by an award-winning actress (let's call her Ms X) follows him to a certain part of the stage during his farewell scene, while a very poignant lullaby is sung backstage.

Fake baby

As soon as the husband exited, the actress, dressed in *baro't saya* and native slippers, slipped and fell flat on her butt! The fake baby was exposed and her bandana fell! Her quick response was a snappy, *"Ay p—!"*

The audience was stunned! The bewildered actress immediately stood up, bowed and apologized to the audience and said: *"Ay soree, soree, soree po!"* The people laughed, and the dramatic scene was forgotten. Fortunately, I wasn't there for the performance!

When I arrived at the theater the next day, I wondered why the stage manager was avoiding me like the plague. Then, the actress ran to me and embraced me, saying: "*Soree*, so sorry, *direk*!"

To this day, I continue to tell the story about this booboo of all booboos. And, yes, I still laugh—very loudly!

Vehnee Saturno . . .

From page A2-6

diva became a recording goldmine when she recorded Saturno's compositions: "Dahil Tanging Ikaw," "Laging Naroon Ka," and "Wala Na Bang Pag-ibig."

Jessa Zaragoza started out as a struggling nymphet in sexy flicks. But, her career surged when she reinvented herself as a singer: Vehnee's "Bakit Pa" became a phenomenal hit.

Other singers whose careers bloomed after recording Saturno's compositions include Jay-R ("Bakit Pa Ba?") and pop star Sarah Geronimo ("Forever's Not Enough").

Chinese version

Vehnee's songs are popular even in other Asian countries: The Chinese version of "Sana Kahit Minsan," sung by Jackie Cheung, is a big hit in Hong Kong.

Unlike most songwriters, Vehnee doesn't wait for inspiration. "The minute I'm given an idea for a project, *grabe tumakbo ang utak ko,"* he confesses.

"Be My Lady" resulted from a dream. *"Nakita ko yung babae na laging inaaway ng kanyang* boyfriend. So, I told her, *'subukan niya ako,"* he relates. But, it took him more than a month to finish writing the lyrics. *"Mabagal kasi akong magsulat kung* English," he confides.

Popular soap

The theme of ABS-CBN's popular soap, "Esperanza," was one of the fastest songs he's ever written—30 minutes! "I was asked to write a theme song, *tapos ako pa ang pinapili ng* title *na dapat daw pangalan ng babae.* Timing *naman na napadaan ako sa* Esperanza street in Makati, and found the name beautiful," he recalls.

Vehnee can't imagine himself in another profession. He says, *"Wala akong ibang alam gawin. Hindi ako nakatapos ng* college. But, I'm proud of all that I have achieved."

'Bunso' affirms . . .

From page A2-5

using it.

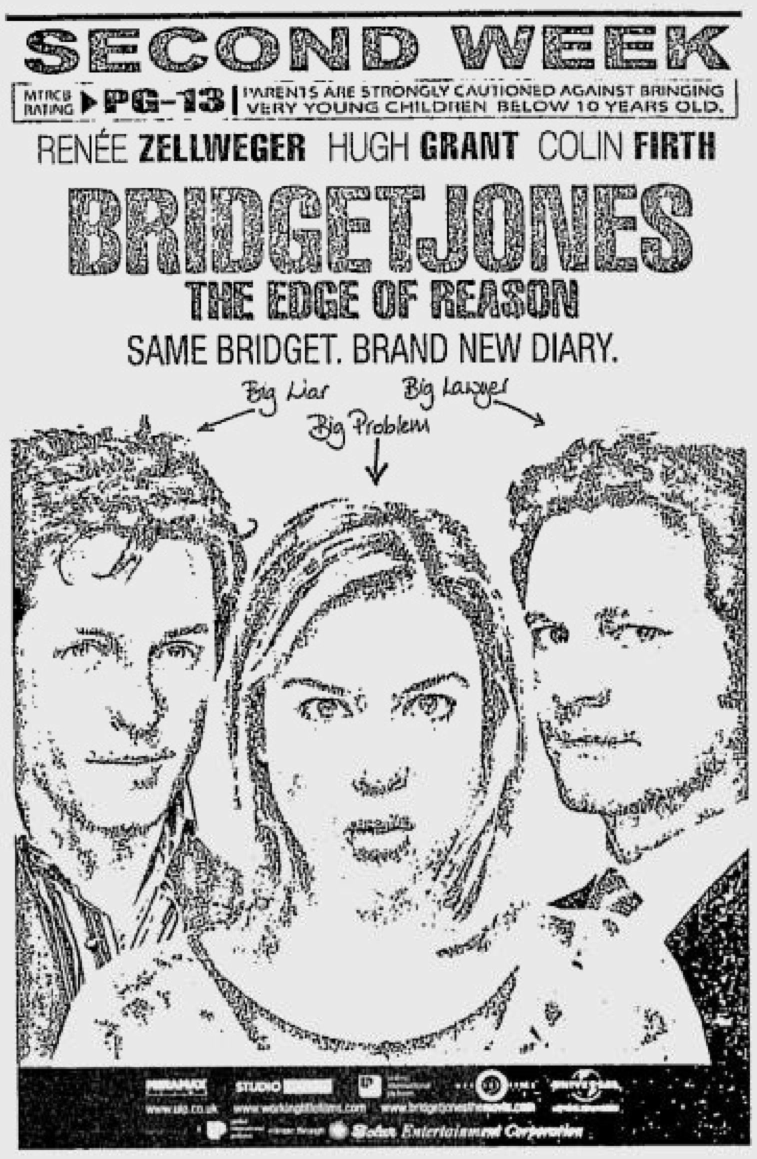
Strategy

This strategy has worked well for Ditsi in her subsequent work as well. A good thing, too, because her focus has been mostly on children, and a natural approach is essential to doing a good job in capturing juvenile subjects at their most honest and spontaneous.

Ditsi's wonderful way with children is a key reason why her work has been deemed exceptional and important internationally. Even more significantly, her documentaries don't only depict children honestly and feelingly, but they also expose society's harsh treatment of them by forcing them to do child labor, and now, in "Bunso," as young prisoners abused and trapped in a jail for adult criminals.

Do go out your way to view Ditsi Carolino's documentaries, especially her latest work, "Bunso," so we can give her the acclaim and gratitude that are her due.

JUVENILE prisoners thrust into the harsh world of adult convicts.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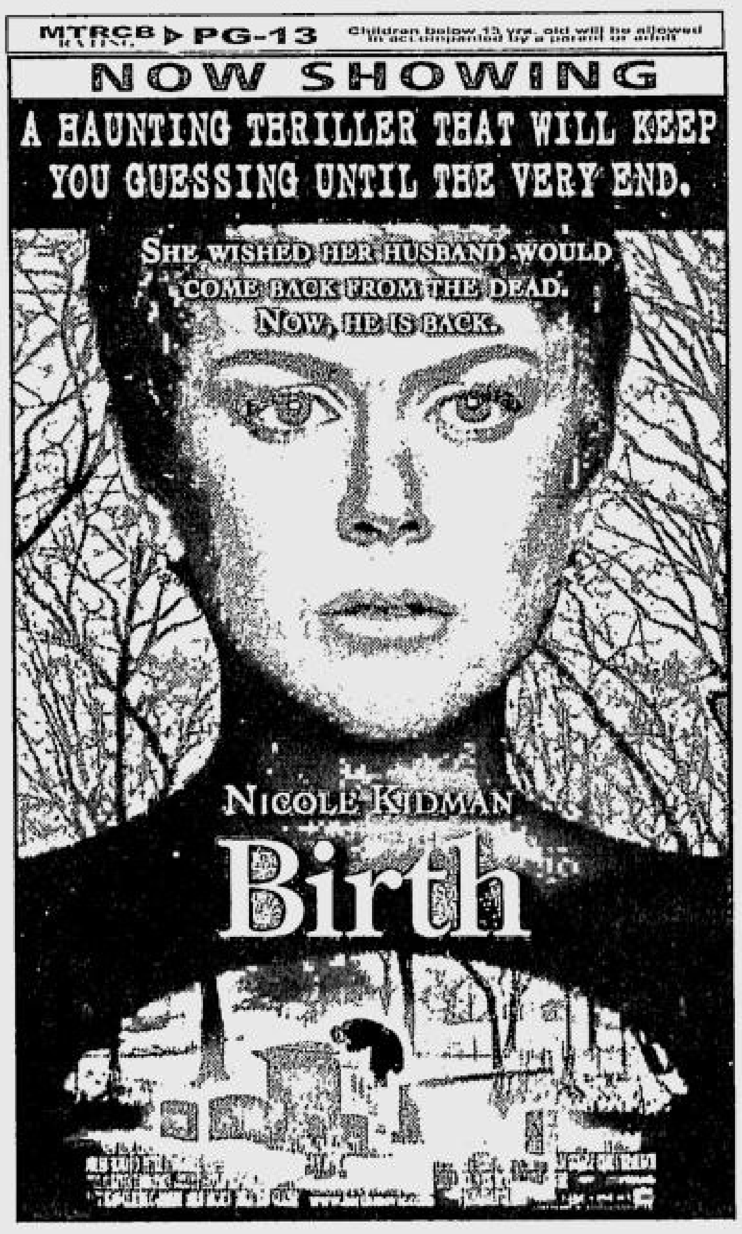
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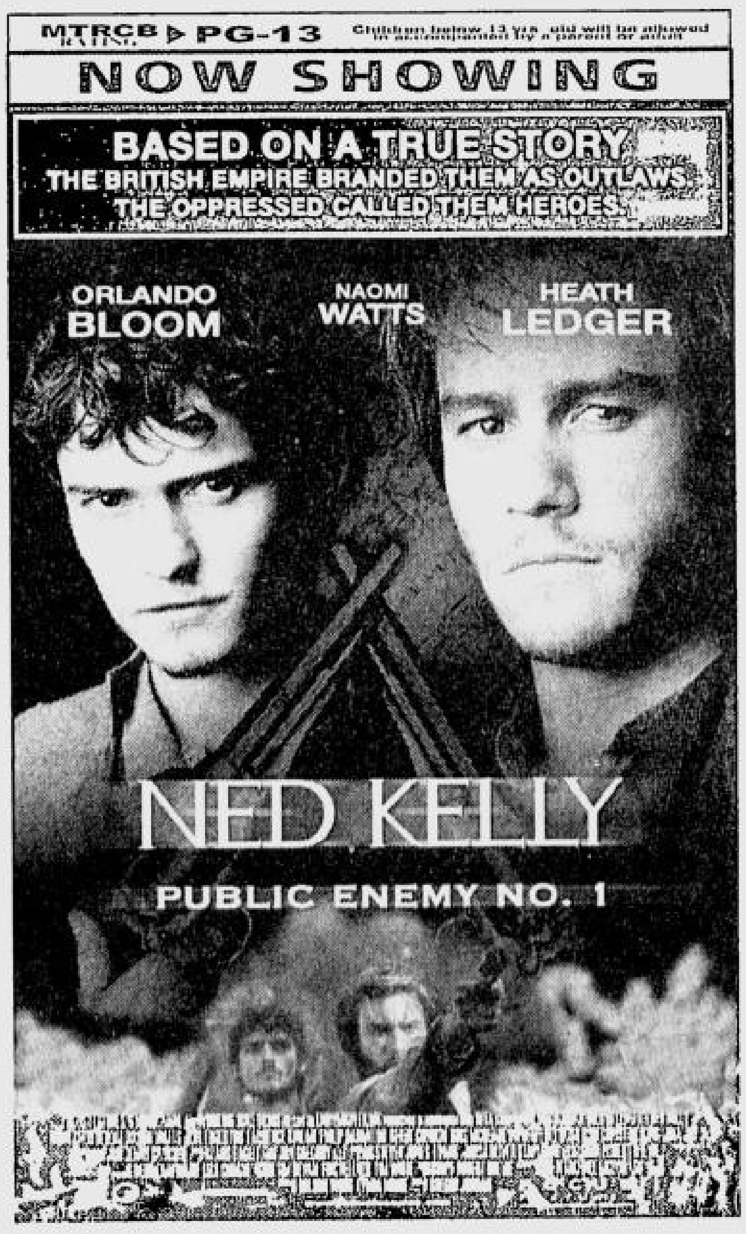
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"A CERTIFIED NEW CLASSIC."
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SATURDAY *Special*

Race for Oscar statuettes begins

LOS ANGELES—Hollywood's major studios are parading their big Oscar contenders, but low-budget art films and animated movies are stealing their thunder as the contest warms up for the US film industry's top honors.

The documentary, "Fahrenheit 9/11," and the cartoon, "The Incredibles," want a shot at the best feature film award. The French film, "A Very Long Engagement," and the Spanish-language "The Motorcycle Diaries" are among the most talked-about films of the Oscar sweepstakes.

Epic

It is not the $160-million epic, "Alexander," but the tiny art film, "Sideways," with a principal cast of four, which is wowing many of the 5,800 voters at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Handlers of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" say it isn't waging an Oscar advertising campaign, even though they are sending out promotional DVDs to award voters.

"It is really uncharted waters for Oscars. Hollywood is still looking for that one movie everyone is going to rally around," said Pete Hammond, veteran writer and Oscar watcher.

The critical film awards season that leads up to the awarding of the Oscars in February is just beginning.

On Dec. 1, members of the National Board of Review named their their top picks ("Finding Neverland" was adjudged best film, Jamie Foxx best actor, Annette Bening best actress). On Dec. 13, the New York Film Critics Circle names its selections, and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association announces its Golden Globe nominations. Their lists help narrow the contestants for Oscars.

Early contenders

Oscar contenders are launched during the holiday season, but because of a scheduling change by the Academy, several serious bids came early. They included:

"The Motorcycle Diaries," in which Mexico's Gael Garcia Bernal plays the revolutionary Che Guevara.

Also in the mix and currently playing are three film biographies: "Kinsey," about the life of sex researcher Alfred Kinsey; "Finding Neverland," about "Peter Pan" writer J.M. Barrie, and "Ray," in which Jamie Foxx portrays soul-singing legend Ray Charles.

An early print of the musical, "Beyond the Sea," in which Kevin Spacey plays 1950s singing sensation Bobby Darin, premiered at September's Toronto Film Festival to a lukewarm response. The final version currently being shown in industry screenings in Los Angeles is earning wide praise.

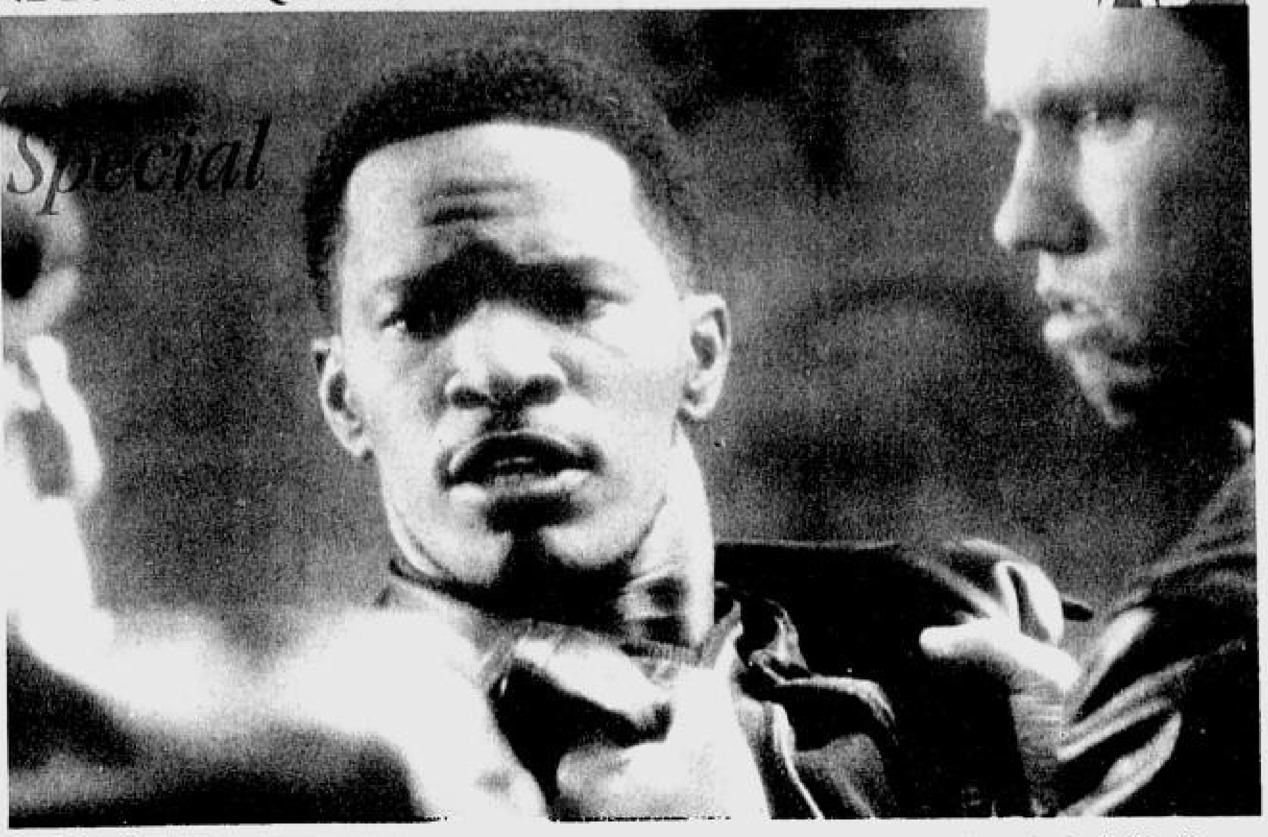
Another comeback is "Collateral," which debuted this summer to good reviews, but many Oscar watchers have already forgotten about it. DreamWorks will push for its star, Tom Cruise, as best actor.

Quadriplegic

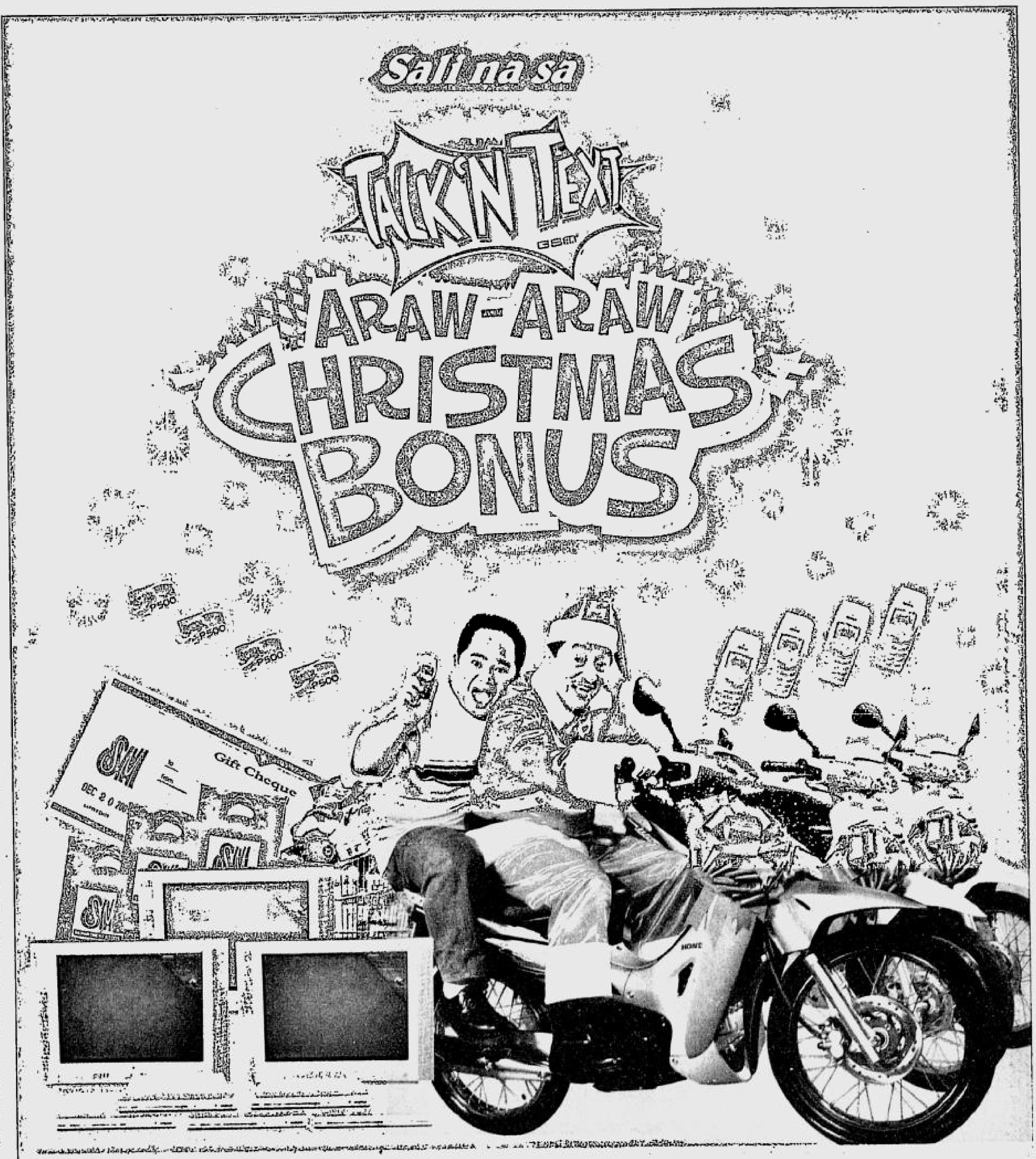
Other best actor contenders include Spain's Javier Bardem, who portrays a quadriplegic fighting the courts for the right to take his own life, and Don Cheadle playing a man who saves lives amid the Rwandan genocide in "Hotel Rwanda."

"Long Engagement," a possible contender in the best picture race, could earn a best actress nomination for Audrey Tautou, as a woman searching for her lover at the end of World War I.

Finally, there are films that opens this month that are generating talk. They include the Howard Hughes epic, "The Aviator," starring Leonardo DiCaprio; the musical, "The Phantom of the Opera"; director Mike Nichols' "Closer"; "A Love Song for Bobby Long," with John Travolta and Scarlett Johansson, and "Million Dollar Baby," with Hilary Swank and Clint Eastwood. Reuters



FOXX. Won the National Board of Review's nod as best actor for his insightful portrayal of Ray Charles in "Ray."



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'NIP/TUCK'

More than just another doctor show

By Noelani Torre

THE TELEVISION series, "Nip/Tuck," is a doctor show, but that's like saying that a hamburger has beef in it—there's a lot more to it than that. This rather controversial show (we'll tell you why later) details the lives of two plastic surgeons—Drs. Sean McNamara and Christian Troy—friends, owners of, and partners in a Miami plastic surgery center.

Family man

Sean, played by Dylan Walsh, is a family man who's struggling to keep his family from falling apart. Christian, played by Julian McMahon, is a self-centered and perpetually sex-starved "swinging bachelor," to use an archaic phrase.

At first glance, they seem to be a

MORE THAN/ A3-2

Jennie Kwan does Filipinos proud at Disneyland

By Bibsy M. Carballo

NOW that Disneyland is opening in Hong Kong, prospects are high that Filipinos will once again reign supreme.

Given this, meeting Filipino singer Jennie Kwan (nee Fernando) recently in Los Angeles, and discovering she was Jasmine in "Aladdin, A Musical Spectacular" at Disneyland there, came as no surprise.

Neither did the fact that 80 percent of the cast of "Aladdin" is Filipino, or that Aladdin himself is also played by a Filipino. Jennie appears in three shows daily in this live tale of love, magic and adventure based on the animated motion picture.

KWAN. Plays Jasmine in "Aladdin, A Musical Spectacular."

JENNIE (left) with her bandmates in the Nobody's Angels girl group.

Kelly Packard
KWAN (second from right) as a member of the cast of the NBC sitcom, "California Dreams."

Recording contract

A full-blooded Filipino born in Glendale, and based in LA, Jennie started her musical career at age 11 with Kids of the Century, which toured across the nation. After playing Kim in Cameron Mackintosh's "Miss Saigon," Chicago version, she joined a band, Nobody's Angels, which signed a recording contract with the Disney-owned Hollywood Records, and earned its first gold record mark for appearing on the "Princess Diaries" soundtrack.

Jennie next embarked on an ambitious one-woman show, "Faces of America," which sought to promote diversity and muticulturalism through the eyes of the youth, at the Los Angeles Theater Center. She did nine monologues, including those of an American Indian, an Afro-American professor, a white New York boy, and a Filipino doctor!

Original material

On the road for two years and covering 23 states, Jennie feels that this original material especially written for her has been her most rewarding project so far.

After that, she starred in the off-Broadway pop opera "Bare" at Los Angeles' Hudson Mainstage Theater; went to Japan on a record deal that took her to London, Dubai, Mexico and the Caribbean; and played Samantha Woo, a wacky singing sensation on NBC-TV's situation comedy "California Dreams."

Jennie teaches voice to about 20 students, many of them Filipinos. "I don't know what it is about Filipinos that makes us such good singers. Maybe it's in the structure of our bones? I really don't know!" she grins.

Email the author at bibsymcar@yahoo.com

Jude Law is versatility and charisma personified

By Nestor U. Torre

IN the movies, 2004 is Jude Law's year. Not only has he been dubbed the sexiest man in the world by People magazine, but he's also topbilled five films in only one year's time.

Many other stars do only one movie every two years, so Law's feat is nothing short of phenomenal.

However, the actor himself is not quite as sanguine about his achievement, pointing out that the five films weren't made in only one year, they were all simply released in 2004.

So, his "amazing" feat is more the result of the vagaries of movie marketing and scheduling, and not because he's been so overwhelmingly popular with producers this year.

Major star

Others would beg to disagree, however. They believe that Jude will become a major star in 2005, because the importance of his movie vehicles has been accelerating this season.

For instance, his being tapped to play Michael Caine's original role in the remake of "Alfie" is a tribute, not just to his acting chops, but also to his compelling presence on the screen.

LAW. Impressive range and depth.

Like Caine, Law practically eats up the movie screen with his corrosive portrayal in the film, which is reminiscent of his other seductively evil performance in "The Talented Mr. Ripley."

Law's last two movies for 2004 are being shown practically back-to-back this month. In "Closer," he co-stars with Julia Roberts and Natalie Portman, and their performances are reported to be attracting the attention of Oscar jurors.

More flamboyant

In "The Aviator," Law plays it much more flamboyant because he's portraying Errol Flynn, the swashbuckling, ladykilling star of the '50s and '60s. But, he defers to Leonardo DiCaprio in the production because Leo is playing the title role, which refers to the legendary film producer, Howard Hughes.

The quality that blazingly comes through in Jude Law's film *oeuvre* is his amazing versatility. He can be romantic one moment, and disgusting the next, not to mention, tragic, heroic, pathetic, breathtakingly entertaining, charismatic, degenerate, angelic, vile—is there a character he *can't* play?

Law attributes his range and depth as an actor to his rigorous training in the theater, where he cut his teeth in the classics. There's nothing like doing Shakespeare and Shaw to hone a young performer's thespic acuity and prepare him for a lifetime of fulfilling, creative work as an actor.

Theater

To be sure, the movies pay much more than the theater, and make a young star famous beyond his wildest dreams. But, no matter how high Law's star will rise, he'll always be known as an actor, first and last.

In this regard, he strikes us like today's version, not really of Michael Caine, but of Laurence Olivier—a better-looking version, to boot.

Law's combination of versatility and charisma should make him one of the movie world's biggest male draws in only a few more film seasons. Right now, he's already one of the busiest!

JULIAN McMAHON AND DYLAN WALSH. Play friends and surgeons on "Nip/Tuck."

More than just another doctor . . .

From page A3-1

reworking of a typical cinematic pairing (good cop, bad cop), but the show isn't enamored with black-and-white scenarios. So we get two well-rounded main characters—not a bad place to start if you want to make a successful television series—plus an equally good supporting cast, not the least of whom is Joely Richardson, who plays Sean's wife Julia.

So if you think nothing interesting happens at the plastic surgeons' clinic just because they don't perform heart transplants and stuff like that, think again. The premise in itself is already atypical, and believe me, there's a lot to be fascinated about when people are talking about (and doing) body modifications.

Vain creatures

We're all vain creatures, after all, and though we can't or won't let ourselves be operated on for the sake of beauty, we're still secretly fascinated with all the different processes.

"Nip/Tuck" will show you that there are a lot—and that they're some of the grossest things you'll see on television (practically as graphic as those in "CSI").

Okay, now we get to the controversial part: Aside from all the operating table visuals, there's a lot of sexy stuff going on in the show. You'll get fair warning though—a big, red Rated-R is the first thing you'll see before the show starts.

The last episode we watched had Christian getting it on with a girl in the very first scene, so you see that the R is necessary. There's been a fair amount of talk generated about this aspect of the show in the States—they're even asking for it to be pulled.

Drug lord

During the first season, the docs get themselves involved with a Colombian drug lord who has them doing free surgery, and the various dramas in their lives escalate and entangle themselves. There are numerous plot twists here, almost as many as those in our own soap operas, but the show is saved by grim humor and witty dialogue.

The regular cast has been enhanced in a couple of episodes with the presence of Vanessa Redgrave, as Julia's mother and Sean's mother-in-law.

The interesting bit of trivia here is that Joely Richardson is Redgrave's real-life daughter. They belong to one of the most famous acting dynasties—their other relations include Tony Richardson, Natasha Richardson, Sir Michael Redgrave, Lynn Redgrave, and Corin Redgrave!

Famous relations

Speaking of famous relations, Julian McMahon (Christian) happens to be the son of Sir William McMahon, Australia's former prime minister.

"Nip/Tuck" is currently in its second season (where the docs confront serial rapists and their own dark secrets), and shows no signs of getting stale (so far, anyway). In any case, it makes for interesting viewing, and it manages to laugh at itself—something not all TV shows are capable of doing.

Forensic doctor loves to read

(Conclusion)

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

CONTINUATION of Dr. Raquel Fortun's essay on reading: "It was not really so bad, though. While we did not have vacations, fancy cars and trendy clothes, my parents made sure our minds and bodies were nourished well. There was never a question that we would get a good education, and reading was particularly encouraged.

"For my mom, reading a book after a meal was good enough to excuse me from washing the dishes. With their meager budget, my parents bought books on installment: Time-Life, Grollier classics, a science encyclopedia set. It also helped that my *Lolo* Amado was a voracious reader and left behind an entire library.

Collection

"As for me, I take pride in my professional collection of forensic science books. My preference for mysteries has persisted. I did, after all, turn out to be a medical detective. As soon as I started earning, I completed the Nancy Drew series as a sentimental reminder of my childhood. Locally and abroad I habitually forage bookstores for cheap titles to add to my trove.

"When I was in high school, my family moved to my grandparents' house. Lucky for me, no one contested my claim to make *Lolo* Amado's room my own. So, for the succeeding years until I got married, his library was my bedroom. His books on philosophy and religion did not appeal to me, but the novels and mysteries did:

"Agatha Christie and Erle Stanley Gardner were favorites, but reading for pleasure had to take the back seat when it was time for college and medicine. Technical must-read books pushed aside the ones to be consumed for R and R.

Ordinary event

"Nowadays, driving off to bookstores is an ordinary event. If I have my daughter in tow, I coax her to buy something to read. She loves the Harry Potter books so much, and reads them over and over. Still I wish she would read more. Blame it on the Internet, cable TV and electronic games, but it would be unfair to compare my time with hers.

"Someday, I am going to have my dream library—cool and quiet, with huge windows and brick walls. My CDs will be there, too. It will be my personal space, my sanctuary. I will read for as long as I want on the most comfortable couch in the world, only to be called for meals. And of course, and I will not be expected to do the dishes after!"

Email mandynavasero@photo-pro.com.ph/ mandynavasero@yahoo.com

Tips to minimize Christmas frenzy

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

AS soon as December arrives, Kulapito is all over the Metropolis braving the traffic, frantically driving all over to put an end to his yearly cramming for Christmas shopping.

He is not alone. Thousands of us are in the same predicament. To make things worse, the recent typhoon held up a lot of activities.

Fear not, however. Here are a few suggestions to help ease the last-minute shopping frenzy:

1. Rum cake—Sandy Romualdez and her husband Bumbulini. The yummiest rum cake ever. I stake my reputation on this. Call 826-0552, 727-5013.

2. Food for the gods—Mara de la Rama. Call 635-3327

Delicious

3. Chicken *empanada*—Chris Ompaoco. Simply delicious! Tel nos. 920-7282, 435-6958.

4. Apple pie—Tina Tamesis. Delicious apple pie baked fresh everyday. Perfect with cheese. Tel no. 727-5324.

5. Chocolate Velvet—Sylvia Lim. A chocoholic's dream. A must! Call 893-7537, 810-7106

6. *Ensaymada*—Mrs. Cunanan. Small, mean, moist and delicious! Call 631 8211; 631 0798

7. *Bibingkang malagkit*. The best in the country. La Tasca. Call 897-9872, 910-1364.

9. Pecan Pie—Millet Soberano. Heavy and delicious! Tel no. 929-1090.

10. Heny Sison—Diva of the pastry kitchen. Ask her what she recommends. Her shop is loaded with delicious goodies. Call 726-5316, 412-7792.

11. Mini *siopao*-siooplets! A *pica-pica* favorite and superb midnight snack. Call 631-3450, 637-1448.

12. Tita Paring's Suman Latik. The best in the East. Found in malls like SM Megamall and Shangri-La

13. Chicken nuggets- Belcap. Comparable to McDo's. Tel no. 929-9432.

14. Chocolate almond crunch—Ana Lorenzana De Ocampo. Tel no. 809-1410

15. Mango bars and fudge brownies—Gela's Kitchen. Call 852-5814 or 0917 539-4735.

16. Cebu Lechon-Rico's Cebu Lechon. That's right, flown directly from Cebu. Tel nos. (032) 344-0119, 0917-4072033.

Perfectly sweet

17. Pandan cake and cheesecake, light pandan cake, perfectly sweet and unbelievable-tasting cheesecake, by Buddy Trinidad. Cell phone no. 0918-9017013.

18. Mango tarts-- Rosanna Angeles. Tel nos. 415-6880, 721-2890.

19. Black & White chocolate mousse—Melanie Platito. Ask her about her bestsellers. Tel nos. 436-1757, 0917-5201307.

20. Galantina—Dulcinea. The best in town.

21. Chocolate Truffle cake—Ginny

TIPS/ A3-3

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Life lessons in Sagada

By Nestor U. Torre

(Conclusion)

ARLINA Onglao (third from left) and friends prepare an alfresco gourmet meal after their spelunking adventure.

GETTING more into the lackadaisical swing of things in Sagada, we did its standard sights, but on foot, so we could experience them on a more personal level.

That ambulatory, ambivalent style proved to be extremely rewarding for Arlina Onglao and the brave others in our group who decided to spelunk in a cave with a river running through it.

They also had a great time meeting and interacting with the widow of the great Masferre, the visual artist who, decades ago, immortalized Sagada's proud and beautiful natives with his artistic renderings of them in his celebrated sepia photographs.

People

Where were we all this time? Communing with nature, the area's hanging coffins, giant pine trees, brilliantly-hued flowers, terraces—and people. Yes, despite Sagada's visual wonders, it was still the people who most captivated us, like the kind and welcoming folks in the small village of Bay-o, the day before.

To be sure, we encountered some less-than-sterling characters, like the tourist-wise vendors at the market, and the drunks who were having themselves a whale of a loud, good time at our inn.

But, they were exceptions to the warm and welcoming rule, and thus easy to overlook and forget. Especially when we remember our best experience during the whole trip:

Sack of rice

Our vehicles were coming down a road when we saw this native couple walking up the hill. The man was carrying a small bag, while the woman was balancing a heavy sack of rice on her head.

Bright smile

We asked them for directions, and the woman replied with a smile. She also volunteered the fact that they had been walking mostly uphill and upmountain for hours. Despite this, the bright smile remained on her face.

After they had walked on, we marveled at the woman's strength, fortitude and amazingly positive attitude despite the hard work she had to do. And, we hurled invectives at the man beside her, toting that tiny bag in his hand.

Whenever we feel overworked, stressed or harassed at work, we recall that woman in Sagada, and all of our exhaustion and self-pity flies out of the window.

Our new Fil-Am friends from the States agreed with us wholeheartedly. After the trip, Arlina, Manny and Kathleen Copon, and Noel Alon and his children AJ and Aileen found their faith in the Philippines and in the Filipino bracingly renewed, and pledged to urge their relatives in the States to make it a point to learn their own valuable life lessons in Sagada.

Tips to minimize . . .

From page A3-2

de Guzman's Sugarhouse. Megamall, Robinsons Manila, Rockwell.

22. Sugar-free desserts. For the sweet tooth trying to stay away from sugar, Lisa Asuncion's pastries are the best. You can hardly tell they have no sugar. Ask her about her bestsellers. Tel nos. 631-7434, 0917 528-2707.

23. Martha's Creations. The ultimate in children's cakes. The simplest yet most delicious icing I have tried. Tel nos. 842-3836, 0917 520-7265.

24. Fruitcake—Maryann Villanueva-Cruz. Heavy, not too sweet. Tel nos. 641-7176, 898-4742.

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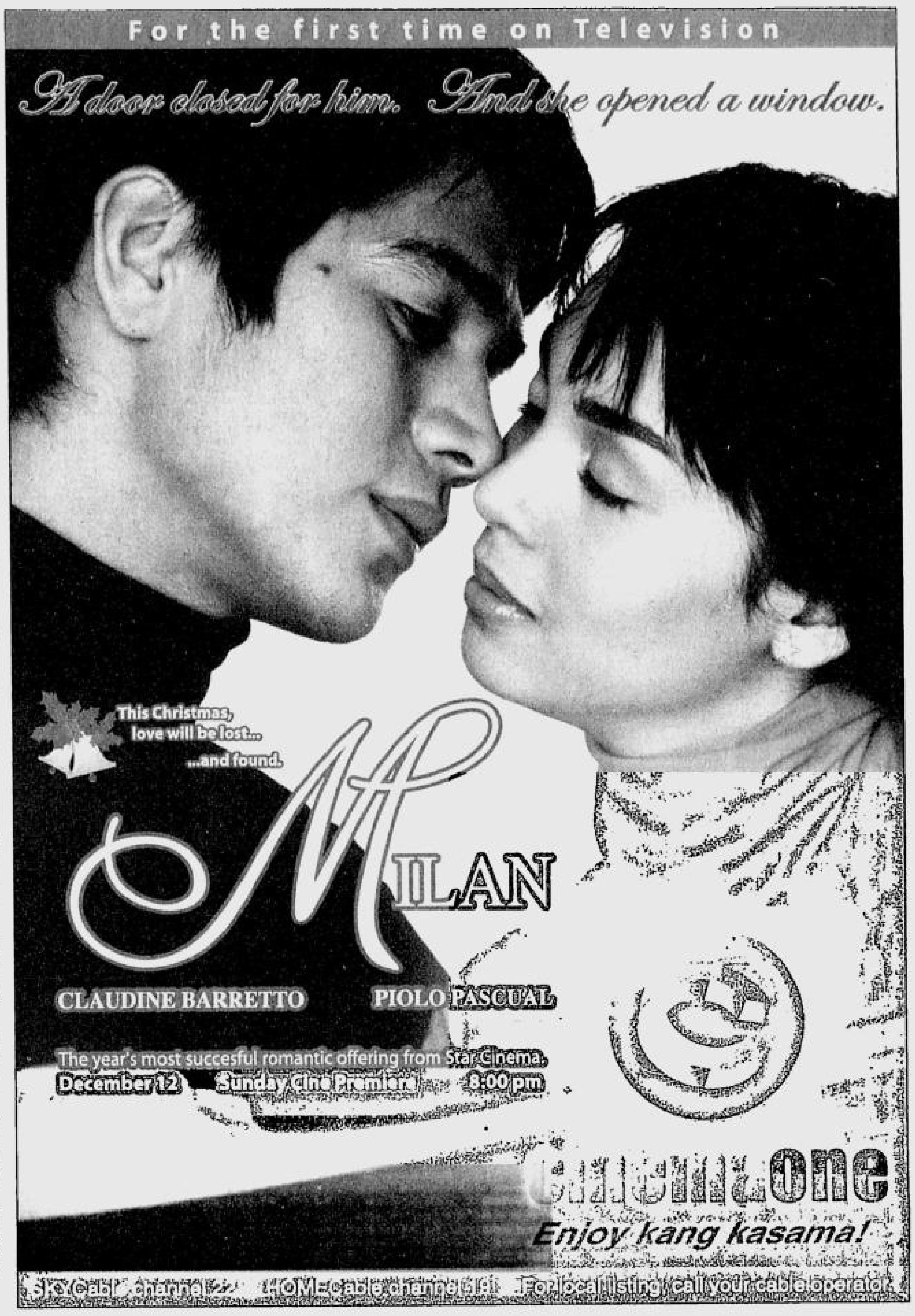
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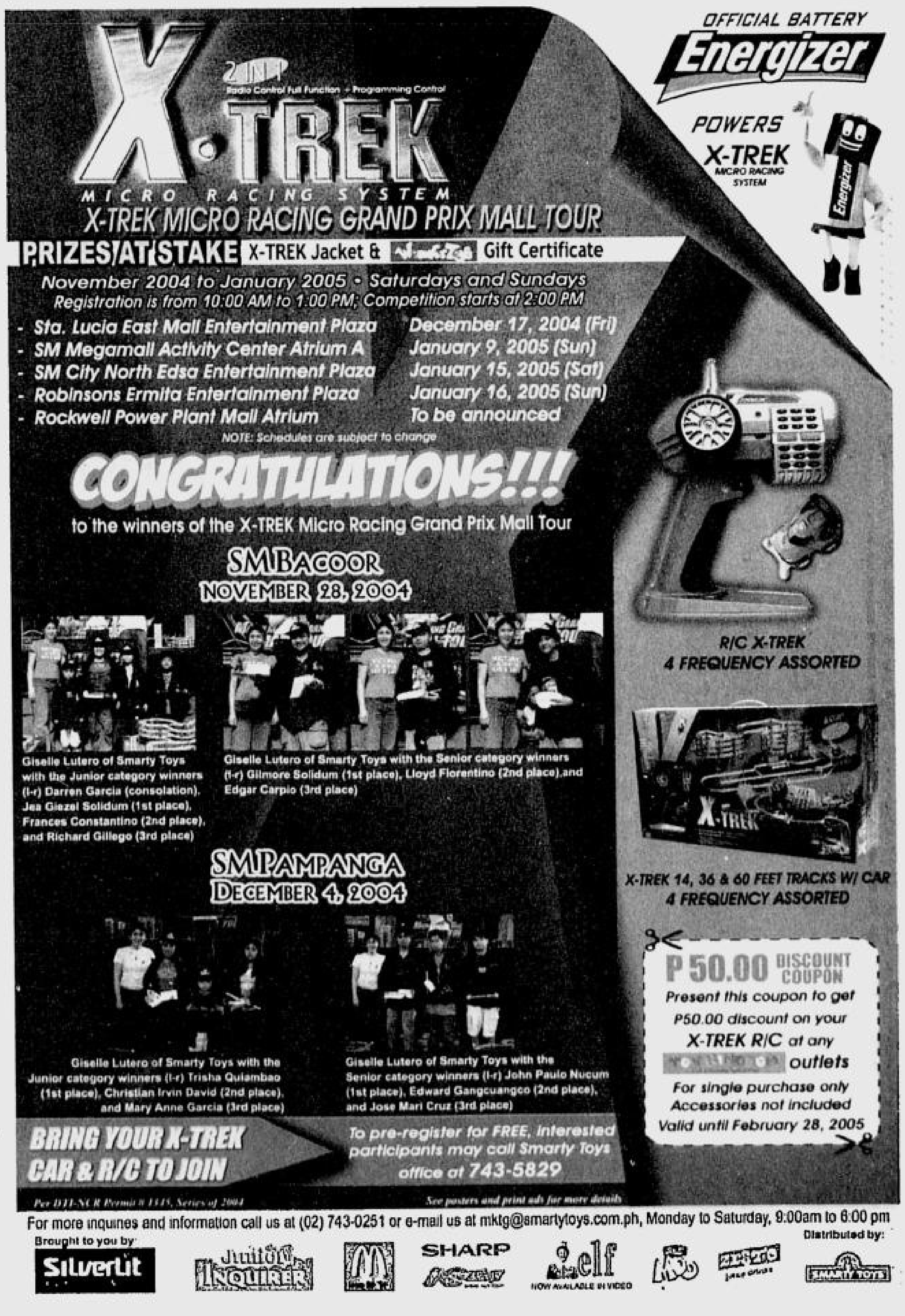
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SATURDAY *Special*

'Home for Christmas' showcases Lea Salonga's warmer side

SALONGA. Well-chosen repertoire.

By Rito P. Asilo

WE met Lea Salonga last Monday at the Manila Polo Club at the novena for theater stalwart Zeneida Amador, who succumbed to cancer last week.

The youthful Tony-winning Broadway star was gracious and warm, but we were bowled over by her affable, irrepressible mother Ligaya, whom everybody called *Tita* Bebeng.

(When we kidded Mrs. Salonga about her colorful reputation in the theater industry, she answered: "*Ay naku*, you're going to love me!" And true enough, we were surprisingly drawn to her!)

Hand in hand

We found it pleasant to see Monique Wilson and Lea together, working hand in hand to pay tribute to their fallen mentor who saw them through their triumphant "Miss Saigon" experience. The irony of seeing two successful women perceived as "competitors" huddling closely together wasn't lost on us. In fact, *Tita* Bebeng and Rob Chien, Lea's husband, caught the last performance of "Cabaret" last Saturday, while Lea was at home nursing a cold.

Yes, they may not have been the best of friends, but they were never enemies, either. (Hey, girls, how about a show-stopping stage collaboration, huh?)

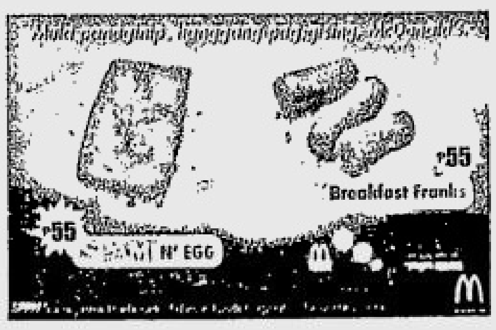
Thirty minutes before Lea's "Home for Christmas" concert at the Araneta Coliseum started, the two were still texting each other about a congratulatory bouquet of flowers that Monique sent—with a card that misspelled Lea's name! (The florist's fault.)

Seated beside Lynn Sherman inside the filled-to-capacity coliseum, we listened to Lea as she sang through a well-chosen repertoire (from Christmas carols to show tunes and pop favorites) that showcased her bell-like voice.

Humongous set

This woman didn't need the humongous set bathed in neons and draped in the rich, red colors of Christmas, or the "novelty" segment that had her and her theater friends doing the inanely crass but popular "Otso-otso," and "Ispageti," complete with their respective dance

HOME/A4-2



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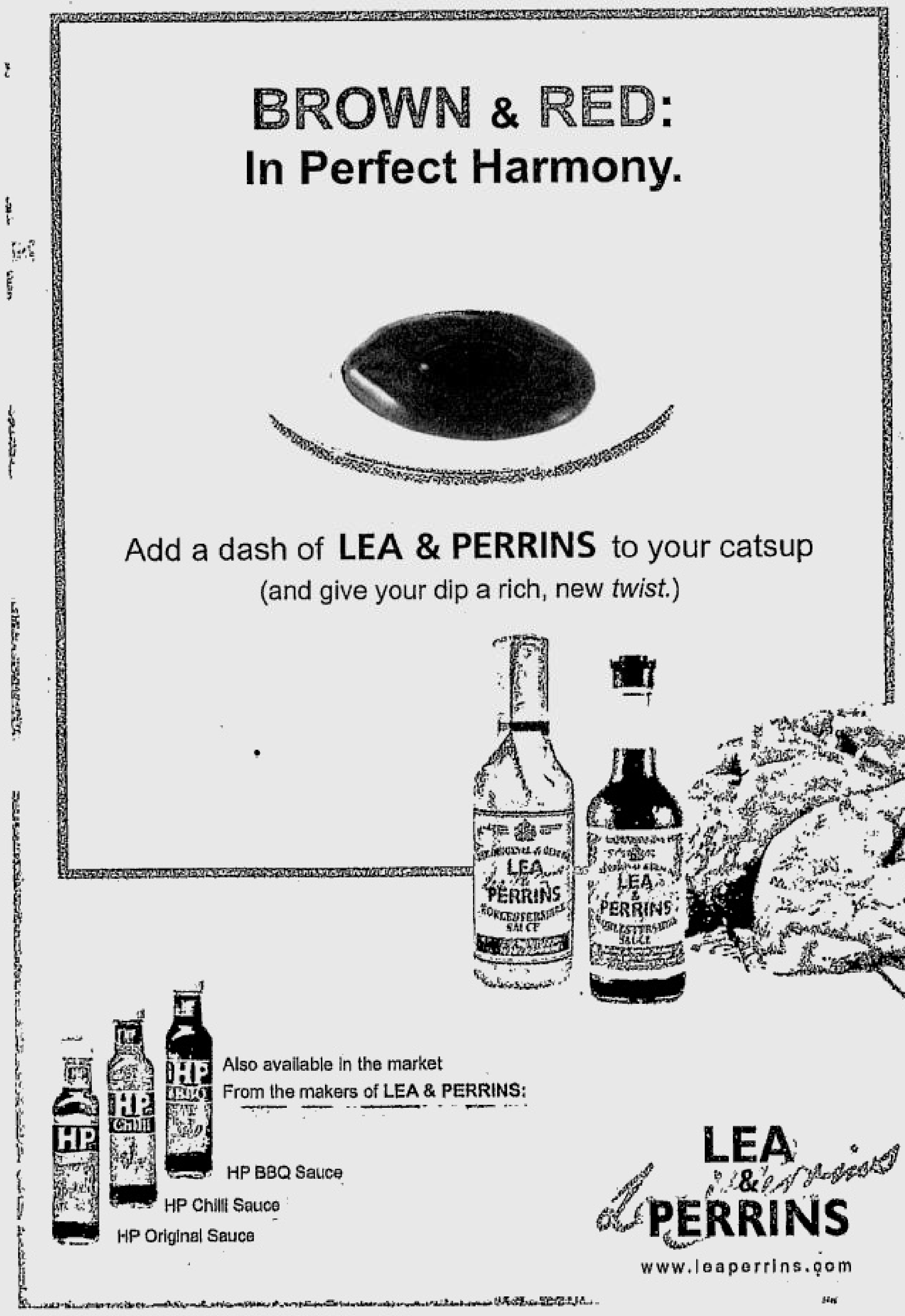
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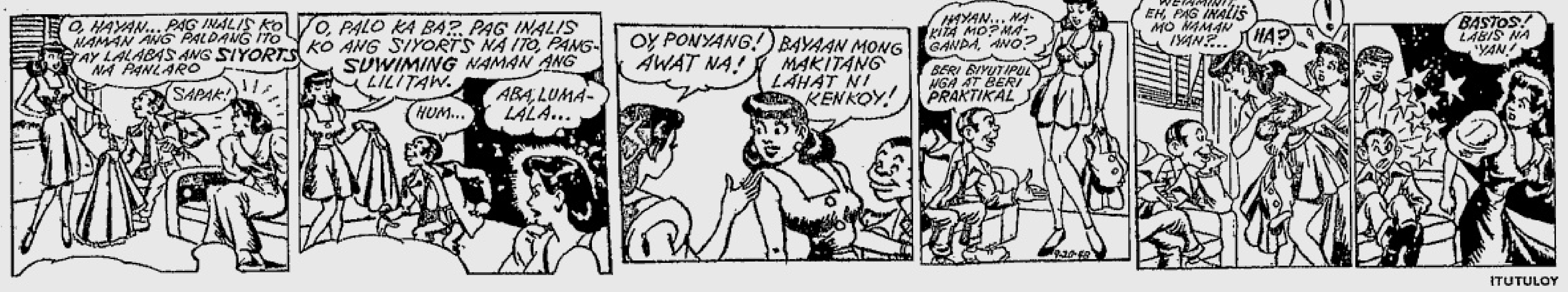
O, HAYAN... PAG INALIS KO NAMAN ANG PALDANG ITO AY LALABAS ANG SIYORTS NA PANLARO
SAPAK!
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HUM...
ABA, LUMA-LALA...
OY PONYANG! AWAT NA!
BAYAAN MONG MAKITANG LAHAT NI KENKOY!
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BERI BIYUTIPUL NGA AT BERI PRAKTIKAL
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WETAMINIT... EH, PAG INALIS MO NAMAN IYAN?...
HA?
!
BASTOS! LABIS NA 'YAN!

ITUTULOY

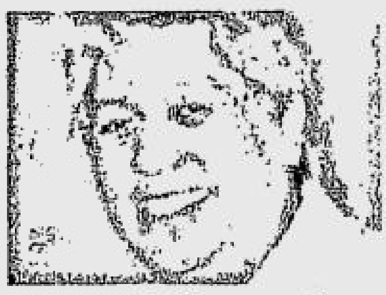
More Christmas Stars light up entertainment firmament

By Nestor U. Torre

FIRST off, thanks to the people who reacted positively to our first Christmas Stars citations last Saturday. They said they appreciated the article's positive attitude, which helped balance the general negativism about the local show biz scene these days.

We trust that today's citations will similarly make our readers feel upbeat about the other people who, going against the usual cynicism and self-serving pragmatism, are giving the entertainment field in the Philippines a *good* name—for a change!

ROMERO. Inspires with continued involvement in local cinema.


CAYABYAB. Selfless sense of artistic service to his audience.

MONTANO. Seeks rebirth of Visayan movie industry.

Dedication

Our first Christmas Star this week is **Eddie Romero**. Our only living National Artist for Film (and Broadcast Arts), Eddie is inspiring many movie people not only with his talent and dedication, but also with his continued involvement in local cinema, both as a creator and as an industry leader.

Despite the fact that he's already in his 70s, Eddie *isn't* resting on his (well-deserved) laurels, and continues to work hard in the Cinema Evaluation Board and other film bodies. His sterling example motivates succeeding generations of movie workers to also dedicate their lives to the service of the film medium and its huge audience.

In the field of music and theater, **Ryan Cayabyab** is another icon of exceptional talent, energy and selfless sense of artistic service to his audience.

His latest significant contribution is his creative and committed stewardship of the San Miguel Foundation for the Arts, along with its symphony orchestra and master chorale.

Working quietly but purposefully, Ryan and his new "babies" have helped further popularize good music, and are thus changing the local performing arts landscape in major ways.

Back to the field of film, another innovator and courageous agent for change is **Cesar Montano**, whose Metro Manila Film Festival entry, "Panaghoy sa Suba," seeks to effect the rebirth of Visayan movies.

This is an "impossible" goal in the eyes of some, but Cesar has fearlessly put his money where his heart is, investing his own money to make the county's first all-Visayan film in decades a reality.

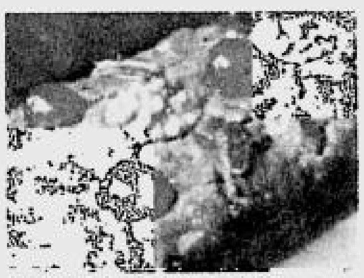
Passionate 'madness'

Shades of Mel Gibson and "The Passion of the Christ"? Of course. And we trust that, like Gibson's, Cesar's passionate "madness" will be rewarded by viewers who will go out of their way to watch "Panaghoy" when it starts its run toward the end of the year—even if they aren't Visayan.

The fruitcake lady's vegetarian dessert

By Mona Gonzalez

THIRTY years ago, Ju.D Lao started her home kitchen business by making a delicious fruitcake. Since then, the aroma of baking has permeated from her kitchen during the holiday season. Her maids are thrilled when celebrities stop by her place in Greenhills to order. (Call 633-1188.)


JU.D Lao's signature delicacy.

Cooking program

But, since Ju.D appears in a cooking program ("Modern Vegetarian Cooking," shot in Taiwan), you can say that she is herself a celebrity.

The latest episode of "Modern Vegetarian Cooking" was filmed at Farmers' Market. "My *suki* was featured, and her grandchildren were thrilled when they saw the program," Ju.D says. "The challenge was to make two viands for P108. We made three, instead!"

Ju.D made the world's first fruitcake cookie, and introduced coffee fruitcakes and ginger cookies to the Philippines.

This year, she will introduce the prune and the ginger fruitcakes. Ju.D's prune cake has coffee in it, while the ginger fruitcake has an orange fruity smell. Her ginger products don't have eggs. They make for perfect vegetarian desserts.

Classic

Jamie Rivera loves Ju.D's Chewy Chewkies, while Maru Sotto and Helen Gamboa like her classic fruitcake. Rosemarie Gil prefers Ju.D blue. "She takes it with Black Russian, a ladies' drink with vodka and kahlua," Ju.D says.

'RATED K'

Too many features make for hurried segments

By Noelani Torre

WHAT exactly is "Rated K"? This was our thought when we first heard of Korina Sanchez's Sunday television show. It is a cross between talk and magazine types, but what we're curious about is its title's meaning. Are the people featured in the show laudable beings? What does it mean to be "Rated K"?

Stamp of approval

"Rated K," which made its debut last June, flits from topic to topic. The one thing these topics appear to have in common is that they're of interest to the show's central personality. To be "rated k" means that you get the Korina Sanchez stamp of approval—or, it indicates that you're airtime-worthy.

"I want to do something that's not celebrity-oriented," she said in an earlier interview. "I want to concentrate on ordinary people."

Well, the show has done that, but celebrities still make frequent appearances. The so-called ordinary people featured here aren't really *that* ordinary.

From some of the episodes we've watched, we surmise that you have to have a physical and/or mental problem, or be the owner of half a dozen pedigreed pets, or be the recipient of the host's munificence.

"Ordinary" people of this last type were the first feature in a recent "Rated K" episode. That particular show's theme was "Kumustahan," and Korina's show visited people who had benefited from her generosity. She had given away TV sets on her birthday.

Questions

The show dropped by these folks' homes with Korina asking such questions as *"Ano na po ang ginagawa niyo sa* TV *na pinamigay namin?"* What should they be doing with it, exactly? Watch "Rated K," apparently.

SANCHEZ. Her show flits from topic to topic.

The rest of the episode dealt with a variety of topics and guests—action stars of the '60s and '70s, Randy Santiago's "*Hawi*" boys, famous props from movies, retired actress Aurora Sevilla, historical sites that have disappeared, former commercial models, and the fauna at the Calauit Island Game Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary.

It's an eclectic listing, with something to catch anyone's attention, and some of the discoveries were interesting—that Lyka Ugarte (whose bikini-clad younger self rode a horse in that White Castle commercial) is now a management higher-up at SM is one of these, for example.

Expectations

Nevertheless, the sheer number of features also makes for hurried, on-the-surface segments. We're not expecting in-depth features from an admittedly lightweight Sunday afternoon show, but intelligent questions are definitely at the top of our expectations.

'Home for Christmas' showcases . . .

• From page A4-1

grooves. But, numbers like this have almost become SOP in shows at the Big Dome these days—even Jasmine Trias had to do them!

We marveled at Gerard Salonga's beautiful arrangements for the orchestra and for Bond Samson's Ugoy Ugoy Band—how convenient it must be for singers to have talented brothers to accompany them!

Surprises

But, it was the "unplanned" surprises that brought out the warmer side of Lea, and truly made the concert special. Announcing that Gerard and his fiancée DJ were getting married in six months' time, Lea sang "Two Words," which the couple composed for her on her wedding day a year ago.

But, when there was a change in the music, Lea suddenly noticed the segue and reacted: "What's happening here?"

Then, from the top of the stairs, out popped her husband Rob, who sang "With You I'm Born Again" with her. It isn't every day that you catch this girl speechless. We even caught Monique dabbing her eye!

Sweet number

Another sweet number, "Over the Rainbow," served as Lea's perfectly sung tribute to *Tita* Bibot. As her beautiful voice soared, black and white photos of the cuddlesome Lea with an uncharacteristically beaming Amador flashed on the giant video walls. Now, that got us really choked up!

Backstage after the show, she said she didn't really like *birit* numbers because they were painful to do. But, in "New York State of Mind," she demonstrated that she's no pushover when it comes to belting! She cooed and then roared, with all the curls needed for the vocally demanding, jazz-tinged number.

It was also so much fun to see her veer away from the dreamy, Disney-associated ballads, because her pure, crystal-clear voice gave new meaning to any song (The Beatles' "When I'm 64" and Queen's "Crazy Little Thing Called Love"). Congratulations, Lea!

Green Archer is Grand Wizard of 2004

MONTAGE

JOSEPH Daniel Sy of La Salle Greenhills won as 2004 Grand Wizard of GMA-7's "Digital LG Challenge" last Nov. 28. The Grand Finals showdown of local TV's most popular quiz show for high school students was held at the Philsport Multi-Purpose Arena.

Fifty finalists from the country's finest schools fought a highly-charged, brain-busting final round in the show hosted by Paolo Bediones and Bianca Araneta.

LG Electronics Manila president Jeff Hong handed a whopping P850,000 to Joseph, while his school was given top-of-the-line LG electronic products. "Digital LG Challenge" is telecast every Sunday at 9 a.m., and is directed by Pat Perez.

More holiday treats on Hallmark

In "A Boyfriend for Christmas" (Dec. 23) on the Hallmark Channel, Holly Grant's fervent wish has taken a long time in coming—seven years, in fact. But, a guy from her childhood suddenly reappears, and takes her on a whirlwind romance.

In "A Christmas Carol" (Dec. 25), Tori Spelling plays a popular but heartless TV star. On Christmas, she is visited by three spirits determined to make her realize the error of her ways.

And, in "Back When We Were Grown Ups" (Dec. 30), a successful businesswoman suddenly questions the choices she's made in life. She then embarks on a journey to rediscover her past, reconcile with old loves and forgotten dreams, and search for a life that she fears has long gone.

Fossil Rouge watches

The makers of Fossil timepieces are collaborating with MTV's "Rouge" and its dynamic foursome to showcase Fossil Rouge watches, a striking line of watches infused with dynamic design elements that render them trendy, pretty and practical.

The new line of timepieces comes in solid, stainless steel-colored leather straps and eight variable styles, and can be worn from daytime to night time. Thus, like the agents of "Rouge," Fossil watches lead a double life, both as a fashion accessory and as a necessity for modern urbanites. Visit www.fossil.com.

"ROUGE." (Clockwise from top) Pamela Fields, Denise Laurel, Veronica Ngo, Pierre Png, Mariel Rodriguez and Desiree Ann Siahaan wear their Fossil watches.

'The Big Help'

Join Nickelodeon's "The Big Help" Christmas Run on Dec. 12 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. at the Lopez parking lot, Rockwell center, Makati. Nick is sharing the love with the Banago kids of Negros Occidental through a tree-lighting ceremony.

Guests include Chuckie and Angelica from the Rugrats, Bettina Carlos, and the Nick choir. Kids who show up in their best Christmas-inspired costumes can win prizes, while the first 500 kids to register get an exclusive "The Big Help" internet card.

Movies on TV

On HBO, Dec. 11 at 6:50 p.m., "Clueless." 9 p.m., "Tears of the Sun." 11:30 p.m., "The Mirror Has Two Faces." Dec. 12 at 1:50 p.m., "Anger Management." 8 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets." Dec. 12 at 2:45 p.m., "Frances." Dec. 14 at 10:30 p.m., "Carnivale" finale special. 12:15 a.m., "Soapdish."

On Cinemax, Dec. 11 at 6 p.m., "Dead in the Water." Dec. 12 at 8:15 a.m., "Black Hawk Down." 6:45 p.m., "A Few Good Men." Dec. 13 at 9 p.m., "Strictly Ballroom." 2:15 a.m., "The Sum of All Fears." Dec. 14 at 5:45 p.m., "Jason and the Argonauts." 9 p.m., "Dead Again." 2:30 a.m., "Fahrenheit 451."

Romantic evening at Vieux Chalet

Enjoy a romantic evening of choicer lieder or German art songs as Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant in Antipolo presents "A Tribute to Nature" featuring soprano Josephine Gomez and pianist Carl Perion tonight.

Concert starts at 7:45 p.m., preceded by sunset and landscape viewing at 5 p.m., and a gourmet dinner. Call 697-0396 or text 0919-8763770.

Solace from pain

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

PAIN is as inevitable as death. It makes us question: "Why?"

The answer is simple: This material world is not our home. Our soul does not feel comfortable in a world of pain and misery.

These negative things keep us from snuggling into this material dimension. It keeps us from feeling good about our earthly existence. It prods us to seek our real home, where there is no pain discomfort.

Solution

A wise man experiences pain, and seeks for a solution. A foolish person denies that he feels pain, and pretends that there is no problem. He drowns himself in alcohol, drugs and worldly illusions to forget pain.

But, reality cannot be erased by chemicals, dreams or fantasies. Reality will hit you in the face, then you have to deal with it. It's always best to know the truth, painful as it may seem in the beginning, because it is liberating.

Pain and happiness in this material world are temporary. They come and go. But, the soul is eternal. We naturally crave for comfort and for permanent relief from pain, but it is in the spiritual realm where one finds natural rest and refuge.

It is terrible enough to be in pain, but it is worse when one does not seek the right solution. Great sages have undergone great pain. They pursued life's highest goal—service to the Supreme—and benefitted from their sacrifices.

Comfortable

Although afflicted by pain, wise men have achieved more than those who lived comfortable lifestyles in mansions and palaces.

Giving no regard to their own pain, they reached out to assist others. They did not make life miserable for others, but simply offered wisdom, love and comfort.

There may not be a definitive cure for physical pain, but there is always shelter and comfort in God's loving embrace.

Email lotuspond108@hotmail.com

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Donita Rose loves being a mother

By Jocelyn Valle

FIRST-TIME mother Donita Rose rears her four-month-old son Joshua Paul, or JP, with a lot of sense and sensibility.

"Most people want to be best friends with their kids and then, they become stricter as they get older," she observes. "My husband and I want to do it differently. We're going to be strict while JP's young. When he's older, we'll give him freedom. He will have to prove to us that he deserves to get more."

"I've been reading child-rearing books lately, and I've learned that, if parents let their children become their best friends when they're young, the kids tend to lose respect for their parents," she explains. "They feel that they can do anything."

Discipline

Donita shares that she'll use a stick to discipline JP. She points out, "You're not supposed to use any part of your body or things that you use everyday—like a belt. My father used a belt on me and he wore it everyday, so I really became afraid of him."

She cautions that, if the hands used to show love for your children are also used to spank them, you somehow take the love away from them. "The hands should only be used for love," she stresses.

Donita and her husband Eric Villarama have promised each other not to argue in front of their son. "We respect each other's opinions, but as head of the family, Eric has the final authority," she says, adding that she and her husband have become closer since JP's birth.

"Before we got married, he told me that, when he'd get home from work, he'd take care of our future kids so I could sleep. And he's kept his promise," she beams.

Donita and Eric tied the knot on June 9 last year. They first met as kids growing up in Clark Air Base in Pampanga, where their fathers were stationed. Eric and Donita's younger brother Paul Cavett used to hang out until the former's family moved to Japan after Mt. Pinatubo erupted. They met again later in the US.

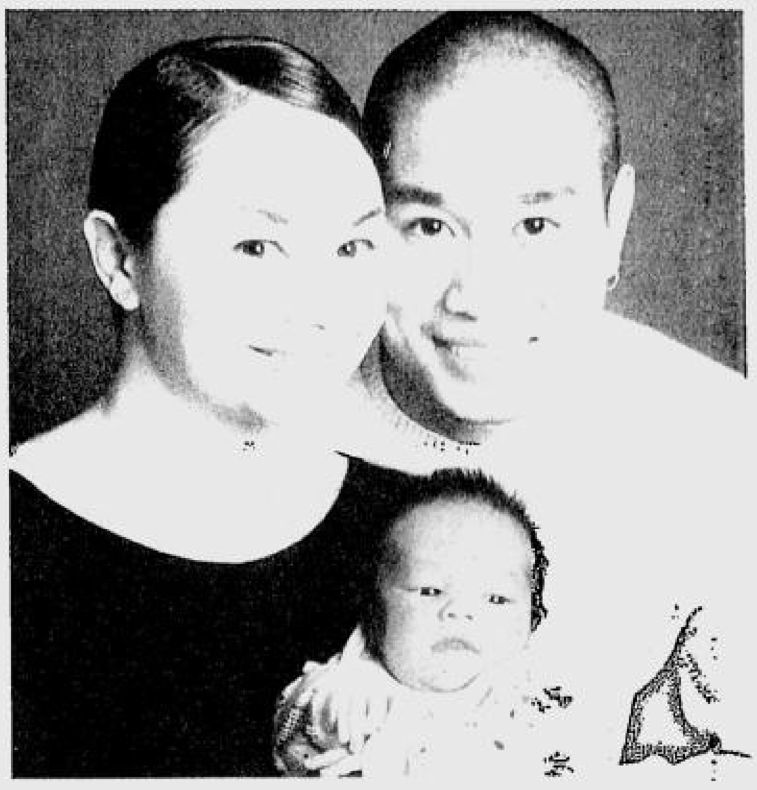
JP was born last July in Singapore, where Eric works as a graphic artist (Donita used to be a VJ at MTV, which has invited her again to host "Most Wanted," one of the music channel's most popular shows).

Breastfeeding

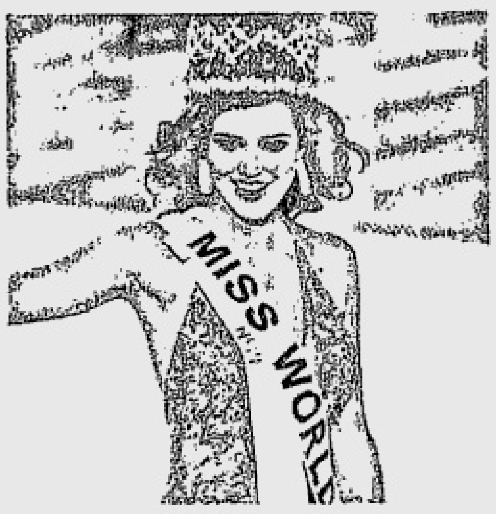
She recalls having Eric by her side as she labored for 18 hours. "He nearly fainted when he took out the placenta from my womb," she laughs. "I'm breastfeeding JP as long as I can."

Donita is enjoying motherhood so much that she's asked her manager Angeli Valenciano for more time before she goes back to work.

A movie, "Seed of Contention," for a director-friend is in the works. It will co-star French actress Virginie Ledoyen ("The Beach," "8 Women").



DONITA with hubby Eric Villarama and JP.



PERU'S Maria Julia Mantilla Garcia is this year's winner.

MISS WORLD 2004

Instructive display of texting power

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Dec. 4's Miss World beauty pageant was an instructive display of the positive and negative aspects of texting power. For the first time in the beauty contest's history, the finalists were chosen, not by the board of judges, but by the viewing and texting public.

Naturally, that gave the candidates of "text-savvy" countries like the Philippines a distinct advantage. Also, countries with huge populations, like China and India.

With its text-voting innovation, therefore, the pageant radically altered its main thrust, from getting a panel of experts to select the most beautiful bets, to a more "democratic" approach involving sheer texting numbers.

Popular reign

This gambit can be defended by stating that this year's winner (Miss Peru) is a beauty queen "of, for and by the people," so she should have a popular reign. On the other hand, if this new selection method passes up women who are more beautiful than the winner, something is clearly amiss.

Then, there's the possible added factor that the change wasn't totally made simply to "democratize" the proceedings, but also because a sizable additional income could be derived from all those texted votes.

The good thing for the Philippines was the fact that the new process enabled our bet to end up among the tilt's top five. But, viewed more objectively, the lineup of finalists this year wasn't as impressive in terms of pulchritude than some past editions of the beauty contest.

Another problem was the decision to include among the 15 finalists five women who had won special awards, like best in talent and best in sports (!).

This was a similarly dubious move, because it introduced other factors into the contest's beauty equation that could muddle up and even contradict the pageant's main intent.

What, for instance, if the contestant adjudged best in sports was also the least beautiful looking bet in the entire competition? Not only would she have no chance of winning the top prize, but she would also be filling a slot that should have gone to a more beautiful woman.

Democracy and technology

So, democracy and technology are fine, but deciding on who should be hailed as the most beautiful woman in the world shouldn't be reduced to sheer numerical popularity.

Perhaps the most popular *30* bets can be decided on by text votes, but the next stages for whittling that number down should be given back to the experts. And winners of special awards shouldn't be regarded as shoo-ins for the final 15.

It's important that most of the pageant's finalists should look like potential winners, so that the tilt regains some of the excitement that a genuine competition generates. Failing that, the pageant should be renamed—Miss Text World, anyone?

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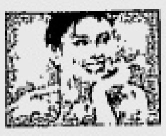
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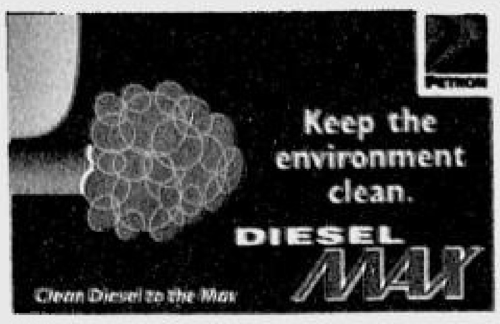


New 'sin' tax bill seen raising ₱15B more

By Michelle V. Remo

THE SENATE is preparing a new "sin" taxes bill that will enhance Sen. Ralph Recto's version, criticized as a watered-down proposal of the government's original plan, and generate P15 billion in additional revenue a year for the cash-starved government.

According to Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan, who represents the DOF in congressional hearings on the tax, the new Senate bill would incorporate proposals from several senators, including Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, whose own version of the sin taxes bill was put in the back burner.

"The bill that the (Senate ways and means) committee is preparing will give an incremental revenue that is P5 billion more than what was expected to be generated from the proposal earlier approved by the committee," Tan said in a press briefing.

The version earlier adopted by the committee expected an additional revenue of P10 billion a year through a 12-percent and 40-centavo increase in cigarette taxes, or similar to Recto's bill.

Enrile's version, which competed with Recto's version, sought specific amounts of regular increases in taxes for each cigarette price bracket, until these reach a uniform P13.50 in specific tax in 2011.

Tan declined to disclose the amendments to Recto's version of the bill that would result in an additional P5 billion in incremental revenue. But the finance official said the DOF's earlier proposal to regularly index the tax rates to inflation would not be included.

Amendments to Recto's bill will also come from Senators Panfilo Lacson, Jamby Madrigal, Manuel Roxas II and Richard Gordon.

Tan said Congress was expected to pass the sin taxes bill before the end of the year as promised by legislators.

The passage of the sin taxes bill is considered the most crucial in getting the country out of its fiscal problem.

Meanwhile, Tan said the government was now expecting more than P100 billion in additional revenue from its fiscal reform agenda, mainly from the following revenue-raising measures: increase in sin taxes, P15 billion; rationalization of fiscal incentives, P25 billion; 12-percent value-added tax, P30 billion; tax amnesty, P16 billion; lateral attrition, P10 billion, and simplified net income tax, P28 billion.

The executive has dropped the plan to impose franchise tax on telecommunicatin companies as well as the P2 increase in excise tax on petroleum.

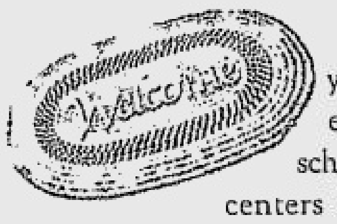
According to a ranking DOF official, the government could make do with the additional revenue to be generated from the plan to impose an across-the-board increase in the value-added tax rate from 10 to 12 percent.

With the higher VAT, which is one of the originally proposed revenue-raising measures together with the franchise tax on

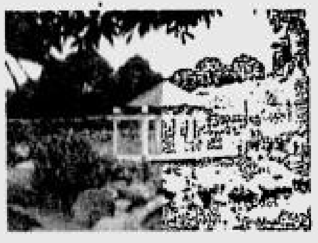
NEW/B6

"When everything important to us is within reach, we know we've made the right decision."

Dr. Benjie Luna and daughter Ysobel
Ayala Westgrove Heights Homeowners

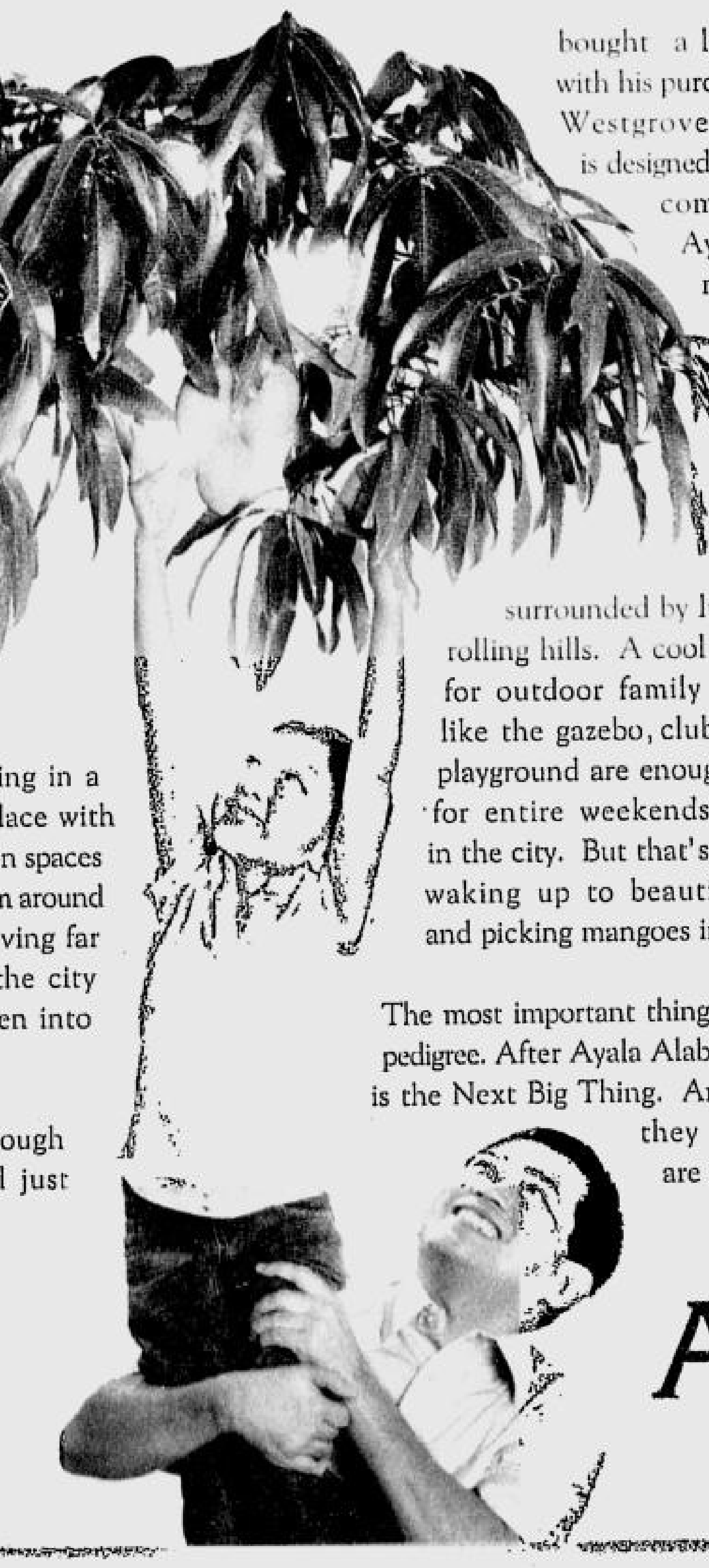


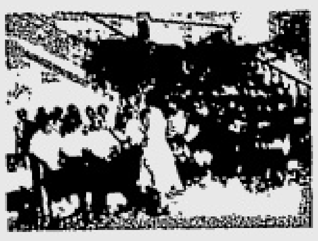
Growing up in the city, you simply get used to having everything within reach – schools, hospitals, shopping centers and public utilities. Everything is convenient and comfortable for you. That's why Benjie, a cardiologist, and his wife, Ginny, a flight attendant, initially had doubts of leaving their first home. But at the end of 2003, they decided to escape the squeeze that has intensified in their 3-bedroom condominium in Pasig City. More importantly, factories in the area have greatly contributed to the worsening air pollution. "We were really thinking of our daughters," Ginny said. "We want them to grow up in a cleaner, safer community."



They've always dreamed of living in a more natural environment. A place with plenty of trees, hills and wide open spaces where their children can freely roam around to play. But the thought of moving far from the familiar comforts of the city seemed impractical. Like many families, they have fallen into the "big city trap".

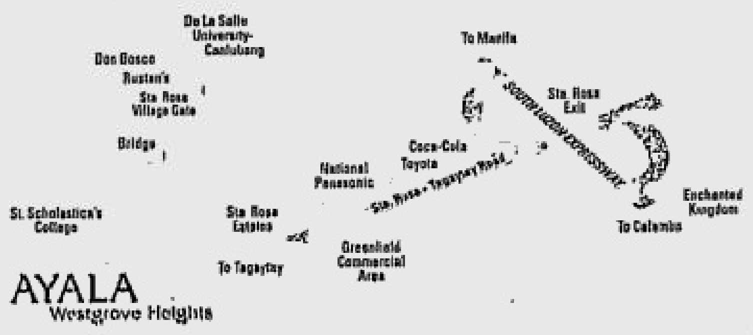
Then Benjie discovered Ayala Westgrove Heights through his daughter Ysobel's prep school principal. "He had just bought a lot and was so happy with his purchase," he said. Ayala Westgrove Heights, after all, is designed to be a self-contained community, similar to Ayala Alabang. All the necessary amenities are continuously being built around it: schools, hospitals, commercial centers, groceries, churches. Only 15 minutes away from Alabang, it is a sanctuary that does not isolate, but offers a chance to escape at the end of the day.





Inside, they are surrounded by lush mango groves and rolling hills. A cool climate is also perfect for outdoor family activities. Amenities like the gazebo, clubhouse and children's playground are enough to keep them home for entire weekends. "My daughters used to miss our old place in the city. But that's not the case now. They love everything here... waking up to beautiful views, playing with birds and crickets, and picking mangoes in our backyard," Ginny said.

The most important thing, of course, is the fact that it has the Ayala Land pedigree. After Ayala Alabang, Benjie knows that Ayala Westgrove Heights is the Next Big Thing. And as they begin to grow their family roots here, they know that the fruits of a wonderful future are simply within reach.



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Displace your bets

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THEY say things must be looking up in business. How else to explain why the stock market is moving up?

It's not as if we're not in a fiscal crisis, *kumadre!*

And up to now, this cute administration of Gloriaetta has yet to get a single tax measure from Congress.

It's not as if surveys after surveys are no longer showing low levels of business confidence. And so, what's behind this stock market upsurge.

In reality, the Philippine stock market has fallen behind the others in the region.

They are saying that's all there is to the stock market's rising.

As stock market players see it, stocks are still so undervalued even after the past months of run-up, that any buying interest is bound to push up prices.

Still, nobody can deny that foreign funds, at last, are coming into the local market.

There are those who are just testing the waters and other fund mangers who are just making some hit or miss bets on us.

That should tells us something about how foreign investors look at our prospects.

At least they are now willing to gamble on us.

This, to me, is better than being ignored.

* * *

DESPITE the sharp increase in oil prices, which is beyond our control, and the inaction of this cute administration on the reforms it promised us during the campaign, which is much more beyond our control, certain sectors in the stock market are doing well.

And so, somebody who looked like Joselito Pascual, a Filipino balikbayan pianist who left for the United States four years ago to perform in Palm Springs, asked me if this stock market uptrend is for real.

Well, boss, nobody can know for sure.

Still, I must say that the telecommunications sector is doing well, each company posting record profits, except perhaps for Bayantel, which is still posting record interest costs.

And in the crisis-proof food business, San Miguel is on a shopping spree for new and old businesses, here and abroad.

It may take time for the company to realize the full potential of its acquisitions. This is perfect. Stock investors always think of the future.

Certain real estate companies are also making some sort of a comeback.

They all slowed down after the 1997 financial crisis.

Still, SM Prime, owner of the SM mall chain, is expanding like crazy, and Ayala Land and Megaworld never really let the financial crisis bother them.

Others are getting some old projects out of the shelves.

In the real estate sector, you see, everybody believes in this "seven year cycle" of boom and bust.

The past seven years after the financial crisis, truly, were the pits for the property industry.

The seven-year cycle, they say in real estate nowadays, is over this year.

The stock market apparently got sucked into that kind of thinking, too.

Plus, of course, the stock market has the recent Supreme Court decision to cheer about, which should be a boost to the long dormant mining sector.

The Supreme Court admitted it made a big mistake in banning foreign investments in mining. Who will invest then?

Indeed, all the minerals in the land belong to Filipinos as our—what did the Supreme Court call it again now—"national patrimony."

Sure, they belong to all Filipinos—there, under the ground, useless.

* * *

ONE time, I overheard taipan John Gokongwei Jr., in a casual conversation with a senator, as he talked about his group's teleco, the listed one called Digitel.

In only a few weeks, the price of Digitel almost tripled.

You know what? Even Gokongwei, who is said to have made truckloads of money in stocks, said he could not figure out why the Digitel stock was going up that fast.

BREAKTIME/ B3

RELAY FOR LIFE
A TEAM EVENT TO FIGHT CANCER

Everyone is Invited!

RELAY FOR LIFE
2004 MANILA
A Team Event to Fight Cancer
Philsports Oval (ULTRA), Pasig City
3pm of Dec. 11 until 10am of Dec. 12

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS An Overnight Campout

Saturday, December 11, 2004

8 am - onwards Registration
8 am - 2:30 pm Decorating of camps / tents by team members
3 pm - 5pm Opening Ceremonies
Hosts: Mr. Dody Lacuna and Ms. Christine Jacob-Sandejas
National Anthem / Doxology Voice of David
Welcome Remarks Dr. Roberto M. Paterno, Chairman, PCS
Opening Remarks First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo
Acknowledgements
Message Sec. Manuel Dayrit, Secretary of Health
Acknowledgement of the Organizing Committee Members
Inspirational Message Sec. Manuel Dayrit, Secretary of Health
Inspirational Talk Fr. Robert Reyes
Song Pediatric Onco Support Group
Survivors' Lap
Team Banners' Lap to be led by Sen. Pia Cayetano and Sen. Mar Roxas
5 pm - Dec 11 - 10 am Dec.12 Individual Walker's Lap (representative from each team)
5 - 5:10 pm Buddha's Light International Association - Phils. Prayer Offering by Venerable Yung Jau
5:10 - 10 pm Entertainment (Song and Dance numbers)
Hosts: Ms. Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo, Mr. Carl Joseph Cuisia Guzman, Mr. Johnny Litton

Mishka Adams
Ogie Alcasid
Jun Ayson of Overdrive
Maribeth Bichara
Jimmy Bondoc
Charlie Y
Concert Artists of the Phils. (c/o AstraZeneca)
Divide by one 4 - Blues and Jazz Artists: Dr. Tedd
Dave Esteban
Tom Epperson
Agot Isidro
Interpretative Dance Troupe (c/o Novartis)
Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski
Kakoy Legaspi
Mr. Crayon
Cholo Malilin
Nina
Miguel Ortigas
The Johnny Alegre Affinity
The Wally Gonzalez Band
and Surprise Guests...
10 pm - 12 mn Wacky Olympics (fun games) Hosted by: Ronnie Ricketts, Dinky Doo, Jeffrey Santos and Bing Agoncillo

Sunday, December 12, 2004

12mn - 1am Luminaria/Candle Lighting Ceremonies Hosted by: Dulce Saguisag/Dr. Rachel Rosario
In memory or in honor of a loved one/thanksgiving
Sen. Mar Roxas
Sen. Heherson Alvarez
Ms. Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala
Mr. Jose Cuisia, Jr.
Ms. Susan Reyes
Mr. JJ Cojuangco Yulo
Ms. Cecile Guidote-Alvarez
Sen. Loren Legarda
Ms. Gloria Diaz
Mr. Myrna Borromeo
Mr. Gaby Lopez
Ms. Beth Romualdez
Dr. Karen de la Cruz
Mr. EJ Litton
1am - 2 am Healing Mass Officiated by Fr. Efren Borromeo, SOLT
2am - 6am Wacky Olympics (fun games) / Entertainment Numbers Hosted by: Ronnie Ricketts, Dinky Doo, Jeffrey Santos and Bing Agoncillo
Izza Calzado
Dancer of Lito Calzado
Kuya Germs - Teen Stars
Junior Marketing Association (UP Manila)
R.S.V.P
Black Cat Bone
Up Dharma Down
Hand Mine and Comedy skit by Breast Cancer Society of Manila
6am - 7am Shibashi Hosted by: Doris Alikpala
7am - 8am Presentation of Support Groups / Entertainment Numbers Hosted by: Cathy Santillan
Bosom Buddies
Petals of Hope
Cancer Fighters
Cansurvive
8am - 10 am Closing Ceremonies/Awarding of Prizes Hosted by: Cheryl Cosim and Dr. Bong Buencamino
Announcement of total funds raised
Announcement of winners
● Best Decorated Campsite
● Best Team Costume
● Individual who run/walked the most lap
● Best Presentation/performance of a Cancer Support Group
● Team that raised the most funds

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Mr. Jose L. Cuisia, Jr., Co-chair (Business Division)
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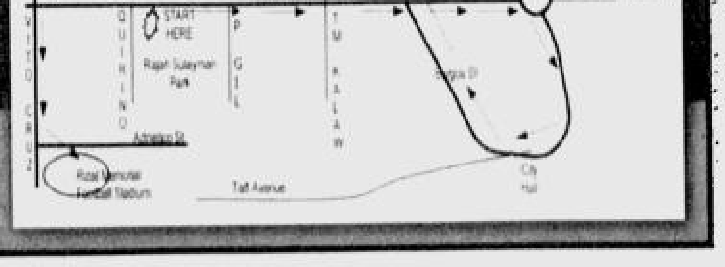
Rahaj Sulayman Park (in front Malate Church)
7:00 am Wreath Laying Ceremony to the Seated Monument of the late Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson
Baywalk Area, Roxas Blvd., Manila
7:30 am Distribution of free copies of newspapers, magazines comics by representatives CMAP-member publications to the public at the famous Baywalk area.
8:30 am Reading Awareness Motorcade from Baywalk Area to Rizal Memorial Football stadium (see motorcade route)
10:00 am Opening of the Sports Events & Extravaganza
Rizal Memorial Football Stadium
Vito Cruz and Adriatico Streets, Malate, Manila
4:00 pm Awarding Ceremony and drawing of raffle prizes.



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Breaktime

From page B2

My take on that is, Gokongwei thinks that nobody is playing around with the stock. It's just that the stock is going along with the uptrend. Period.

But then I tuned out when Gokongwei started to make a sales pitch on a subscription to Sun cellular phone (owned by Digitel) to the senator. Business is business.

* * *

NOW Sen. Sergio Osmeña III thinks that Congress can only pass the sin taxes this year, if we are lucky.

But still the Senate, according to Osmeña, may even change the version of the House of Representatives. The Senate will try to bring up the tax rates.

Osmeña believes that the Senate cannot overdo it, because raising the taxes too much can only invite all-out opposition from the affected companies.

They are the US cigarette company Phillip Morris, the business empire of taipan Lucio Tan, and San Miguel.

If the Senate insists on too big an increase in the tax rates, according to Osmeña, those businesses will have to fight the measure no end. Nothing will happen.

In short, there has to be a compromise. But then again, that's what taxation is all about. I mean, taxation is known to cause revolutions. Even just a tax on tea!

And what was it again that our forefathers used to say about taxation without representation?

* * *

BETWEEN us girls, a couple of executives from the giant Swiss watch company Swatch visited the country recently.

One of them was Stephan Ritzman, who is based in Singapore, head of the group's operations in this part of the world.

Ritzman was the guest of honor to a party held at the home of businesswoman Virgie Ramos, who holds the exclusive distributorship of Swatch here.

Apparently, the Swatch executives wanted to show a little gratitude to Ramos for what she did for the Swatch name brand in this country.

Look, under the Ramos distributorship, "Swatch" became as much an everyday word here as *butong pakwan*.

* * *

IN THE 1980s, actually, Ramos had the foresight to get the exclusive distributorship of the new brand of cheap, chic watches called Swatch.

Today, Swatch is a household name here, what with the celebrity endorsement of basketball star Alvin Patrimonio, or even our lone gold medalist in the last Asian Games, Mikee Cojuangco.

Mikee belongs to the Cojuangco side of Tita Cory. Her father is the new POC president, the former congressman of Tarlac Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

Now, the new Swatch model Borgy Manotoc happens to be the son of Rep. Imee Marcos, the daughter of the late former President Ferdinand Marcos.

I think it is proof enough that, at least in marketing, there is no politics. Ramos now has Swatch endorsers from both sides of the long warring political Marcos and Aquino fences.

* * *

SUPPOSEDLY, Ritzman has been asking around about the economic prospects. I think he knows a lot more than he lets on.

As if I did not know that the gentleman from Switzerland was here in the Philippines to rally the dealers of the various watch brands under the Swatch Group.

The watch brands in his calling card, which are apparently the brands he is pushing for in his rah-rah-rah visit, included Rado, Omega, Longines, Calvin Klein, Tissot, Hamilton, Blancpain, Balmain, and of course Swatch.

For the sake of Lito and Bong, the Swatch Group of Switzerland has acquired several lines of watches.

It now also owns a company which makes watch parts and components and supplies almost every other Swiss watch brand.

Imagine, if only 10 percent of the 80 million Filipinos buy watches from the Swatch Group, that's already eight million pieces, and Ritzman will be smiling ear to ear.

You know what? There are some eight million Filipinos working overseas. I think that's a huge market

Garments trade seen to grow 10% in '05

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE FLAT performance of the garments industry in the first 11 months is seen to pave the way for an expected 10-percent growth in 2005—the first year when the global market operates without the quota system.

Garments and textile export earnings in the first 11 months posted a flat growth rate over the same period last year at $2.5 billion.

According to the Garments and Textile Export Board, the industry performed as expected, although there were indications it could surpass the forecast flat growth for 2004.

GTEB executive director Serafin Juliano yesterday said that local garment makers and exporters have entered the transition phase from isolated operations to collaborative enterprises by remodeling their businesses.

He explained that the changes would consist of integrating independent operations, rationalizing redundant ones, as well as sharing resources and customer base among companies.

Government data showed that from 2001 until the first half of 2004, 388 new manufacturing facilities started operations while 269 factories shut down, resulting in a net gain of 119 new businesses.

In the same period, 44,031 workers were hired for new jobs while 42,128 were laid off—a net gain of 1,903 new jobs.

"This shows that, as the local industry is in transition, there will be closures and consolidation, but the result will always be a net gain," Juliano said.

From January to November, exports to the United States amounted to $1.78 billion or 70.5 percent of total exports. This means a decline of 2.9 percent from $1.83 billion in the year-ago period.

On the other hand, exports to the European Union shot up by 19.2 percent to $387.7 million from $325.4 million. This accounted for 15.4 percent of all garment exports.

Top EU destinations in the first 11 months were Great Britain, with shipments valued at $110 million; Germany, $88.9 million; the Benelux (Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg) countries, $68 million; France, $50 million; Spain, $26.2 million; and Italy, $19.8 million.

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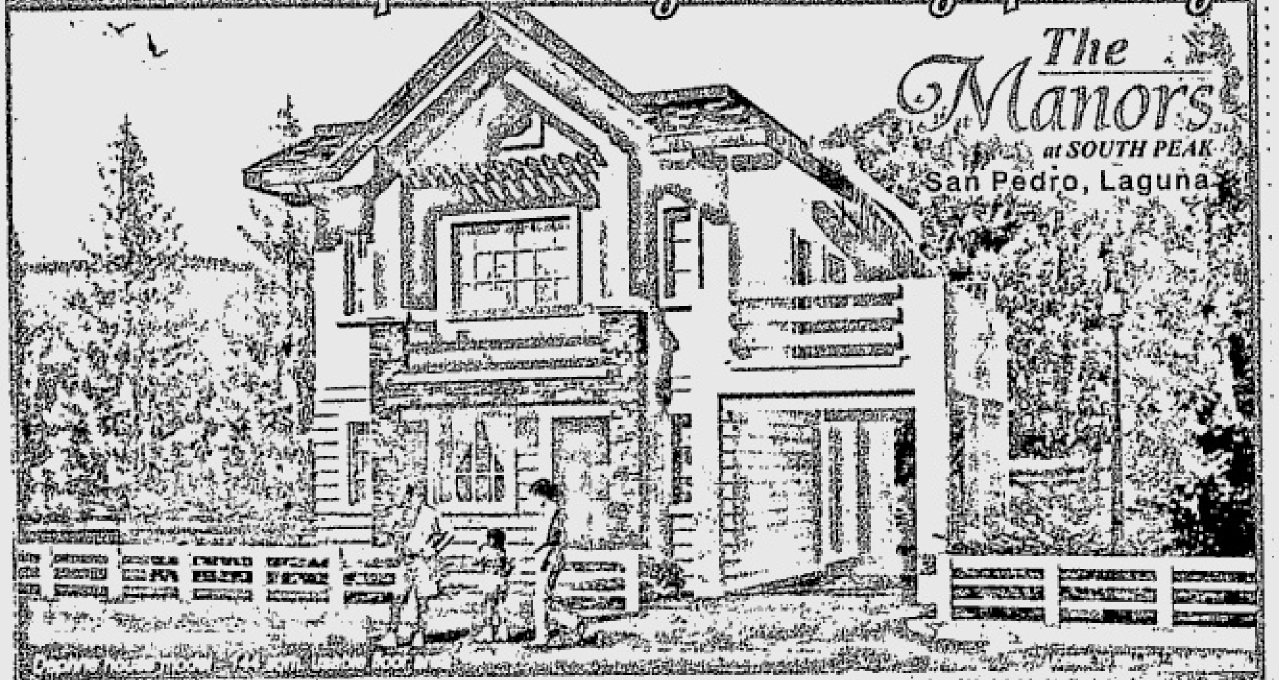

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Helping UP health science grads stay in the country

By Blanche S. Rivera

MOST of them don't want to leave the country; some even want to return to their hometowns to render service to their townmates. But many end up working abroad because they could not find decent jobs for their profession here.

While health science graduates of the University of the Philippines Manila are easily some of the country's best, finding work here is a big problem for most.

Fe Marilyn Lorenzo, executive director of the National Institutes for Health and Development Studies, said some of their graduates even ended up in a totally unrelated field like call centers.

Only 1% want to go abroad

A survey of graduating students of the UP Manila College of Allied Medical Professions and the College of Dentistry showed that more than half preferred to work in Metro Manila.

Those who said they planned to immediately work abroad after graduation represented less than one percent of respondents. In fact, more would-be graduates said they wanted to return to their hometowns to work.

The problem apparently lies in the lack of a placement system that would put UP health sciences graduates in "meaningful jobs" in the the Philippines.

Last Thursday, UP Manila launched the school's voluntary placement system that would link its graduates with health care employers in the Philippines, including government hospitals and other state-owned health facilities.

Finding a niche in RP

UP Manila Chancellor Marita Reyes said the placement system would encourage the graduates to serve in the Philippines after college and give back what the people spent for their education.

The education of UP students is subsidized by taxpayers' money.

"We cannot say whether they will eventually leave the country or not. But if we place them in meaningful jobs here and help them find their niche in the Philippines, we are very optimistic that they will stay," Reyes said during a media briefing at the UP Philippine General Hospital.

"UP Manila graduates will work in the Philippines, whether they serve in government or the private sector. It would be better if they could practice in rural and underserved areas, but even if they don't, at least they would be working here," said Lorenzo.

Alarming situation

During their presentation of the placement program, UP Manila deans and professors highlighted the deteriorating health care system in the country caused by the migration of health workers, particularly nurses.

The Philippines is now the top exporter of nurses in the world and the second biggest exporter of doctors. Most of them are employed in the United States, United Kingdom and the Middle East where they earn almost 20 times their wages here.

Around 8,000 nurses leave the country every year, 2,000 of them former doctors. As the country produces only about 1,000 doctors a year and the doctor-to-population ratio here is 1 is to 26,000, the situation has alarmed hospitals, medical schools and even Congress.

No line items

Proponents of the UP Manila placement system have met with some local officials and raised the need for plantilla items for health workers in their areas.

Reyes said many local governments do not have items for dentists, pharmacists and therapists, believing that a doctor and a nurse would suffice for the local government.

"Hopefully, this will make officials realize that they need to create an environment that would keep the best health workers here instead of creating situations where they are forced to seek employment elsewhere," said UP Manila vice chancellor Roland Simbulan.

UP Manila will meet with employers, hospitals and government health agencies early next year to map out job opportunities for its graduates.

Lorenzo said the students have expressed their need for assistance in referrals, seminars, information on job openings and contacts with prospective employers after they graduate.

A hospital's antidote to lack of doctors: higher pay for residents

By Tessa R. Salazar

MANY community hospitals in far-flung areas have no more doctors. Medical schools are seeing fewer enrollees, and are in danger of closing shop.

According to Dante Morales, a cardiologist and medical director of the Manila Doctors Hospital, the number of examinees for the National Medical Admission Test—the gateway to acceptance in medical schools—was recently pegged at only 700.

Compare this to the 5,000 enrollees for nursing courses in the Far Eastern University, 3,000 in Fatima College, and 1,300 in Manila Doctors.

And then there are the doctors, even specialists treating killer diseases, who have started taking up nursing courses so they could earn a higher income and offer their children a better life.

Lack of medical residents

The situation has gotten so bad that, according to Morales, one hospital now only has nine medical residents. It actually has 21 positions for residency, but got only 14. And out of the 14, five have left for abroad.

Cynthia Cuayo Juico, a pediatrician who heads research and training at the Manila Doctors College, said some hospitals have started getting Indonesian medical residents.

"Indonesian doctors are going to our hospitals for their training," Juico said.

Morales said the "antidote" to the problem was to increase the health professional's honorarium, improve education, training and research in the hospitals, and motivate young residents to join international and local research competitions.

He said Manila Doctors has increased the pay of its residents to encourage them to stay. He said that among the private hospitals, Manila Doctors now pays the highest salaries to doctors.

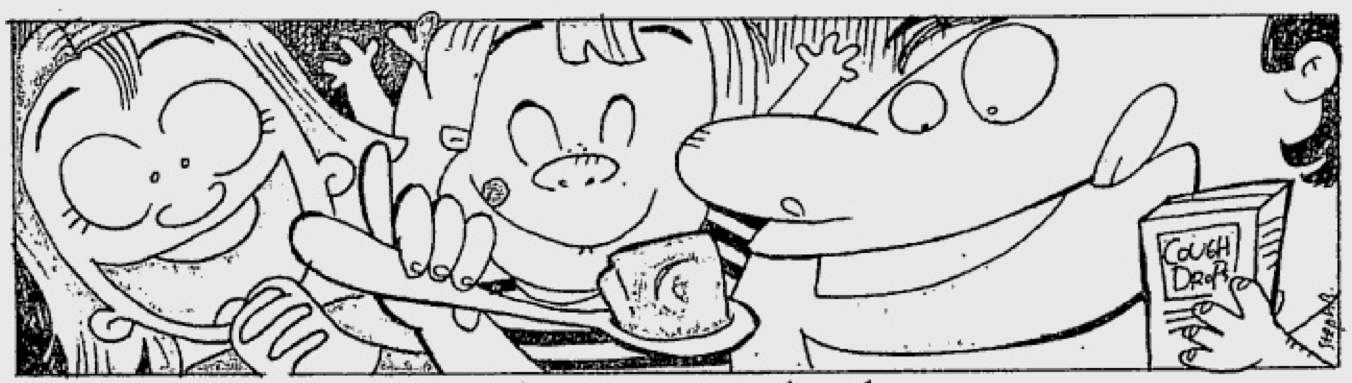
Training, research

Juico said they also encourage their doctors to join research contests and give presentations here and abroad.

"If there's an invitation for them to present a paper, we support them," she said.

Juico said her peers are trying to become role models whom younger doctors could emulate so they would not be tempted to shift to other professions.

"We hope these doctors would continue practicing their profession in the Philippines," she said. "When one becomes a doctor, it's a sacrifice and you're not in it just for the money."



Chocolate cough drops

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

ATTENTION chocolate lovers: someday your cough medicine may taste like your favorite food.

Three years ago, the 2nd International Cough Symposium challenged researchers to come up with new cough treatments and a better understanding of how and why people cough. At the moment, many antitussive (the word *tussis* is Latin for cough) preparations involve opioids such as codeine, which has several side effects like drowsiness and which can be addictive.

Asthma researcher Dr. Peter Barnes and his colleagues at the Imperial College London in the United Kingdom rose to the challenge. Their paper appears in the December issue of the journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

Cocoa chemical

Theobromine is a chemical in cocoa that falls under the class of methylxanthines, a subgroup of molecular compounds called xanthines that are known to act as stimulants and bronchodilators.

Because of this, scientists have studied xanthines in search of possible treatments to various respiratory illnesses. Theobromine has been low on the list because it was not effective at relaxing the bronchial muscles and helping people breathe as other compounds did.

Still, say Barnes et al. in their paper, studies conducted in the last decade suggested that theobromine might have a unique antitussive effect, unlike other methylxanthines.

Barnes et al. decided to look into these anticoughing properties, using guinea pigs and humans to find out how and why theobromine can prevent coughs.

Inducing coughing

In one experiment, female guinea pigs were first exposed to a citric acid solution for a few minutes and then given a solution containing either theobromine, codeine, or a placebo. An hour after the first exposure, the guinea pigs were again exposed to more doses of citric acid over the course of six hours.

The efficacy of the treatment was determined by the decrease in the number of coughs between the guinea pigs' first and second exposures to the tussive agent.

A similar test on humans involved 10 adults who were first exposed to capsaicin—the chemical in peppers that makes them hot—to induce coughing. Each adult, was then given a solution containing either 1,000 mg of theobromine, 60 mg of codeine phosphate, or a placebo, and the capsaicin treatment was then repeated.

Barnes et al. repeated this test once a week for three weeks.

Less cough

Barnes et al. found that the guinea pigs given codeine and theobromine had similar responses to the treatment and these animals coughed less often than those that were on the placebo.

Interestingly, the researchers found that the humans who took the theobromine coughed at least 30 percent less than those who were on the placebo, and approximately 20 percent less than those who took codeine.

They also found that the volunteers did not complain of any side effects involving the heart and central nervous system.

Having determined that theobromine could help prevent coughing, Barnes et al. conducted a series of experiments to find how it works using the vagus nerves of guinea pigs and of a man undergoing a heart and lung transplant.

The vagus nerve runs from the brainstem to the abdomen and is involved in controlling one's heart rate, speech and breathing. The researchers' results suggest that theobromine works by suppressing vagus nerve activity.

As they didn't have enough vagus nerve samples to work with, they called for further studies to verify their findings.

And an actual chocolate cough drop isn't going to become a reality for several more years to come.

7 oz of chocolate

If pharmaceutical companies decide to manufacture the theobromine cough medicine, it would be unlikely that the medicine would have any real chocolate in it.

Barnes noted in an interview that one would have to eat seven ounces of dark chocolate to ingest an amount equivalent to a single dose of theobromine used in the study.

This doesn't mean, however, that one should eat chocolate to stop coughing because, for one, too much candy isn't good for the health, and for another, since chocolate is a solid, chewing it while in the midst of a coughing fit could lead to choking.

Also, as people will not want to spend a day sucking on a pound of chocolate to stop coughing, it is unlikely that this cough medicine will ever hit the market in any form unless the tablet or solution is mostly made up of theobromine.

Still, a chocolate cough medicine would make a nice change from the fruit flavors already in the market.

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

Young men warned of laptop health risk

LONDON—Teenagers and young men should keep their laptops off their laps because they could damage fertility, an expert said on Thursday.

Laptops, which reach high internal operating temperatures, can heat up the scrotum which could affect the quality and quantity of men's sperm.

"The increase in scrotal temperature is significant enough to cause changes in sperm parameters," said Dr. Yefim Sheynkin, an associate professor of urology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

"It is very difficult to predict how long the computer can be used safely," he said. "It may not be at all, if the testicular temperature goes up high within a very short period of time."

Long-term use

Adolescents and young men who use laptops several times a day over many years face the greatest risk. Sheynkin fears that if laptop use is not curtailed, the men could face problems in 15-20 years when they want to start a family.

"Long-term use may have a detrimental effect on their reproductive health," he said.

Sheynkin and his team studied the impact of using a laptop on 29 healthy volunteers between the age of 21 and 35 by measuring scrotal temperature before and after they used a computer on their lap.

Even without turning the laptop on, the scrotal temperature rose by 2.1 degrees Celsius when the young men sat with their thighs together to balance the computer on their lap.

When they switched it on, the temperature rose—by 2.8 degrees Celsius on the right side and 2.6 degrees Celsius on the left.

"It shows that scrotal hyperthermia is produced by both special body posture and the local heating effect of laptop computers," Sheynkin said.

The researchers used two brands of computers in the study.

"All laptop computers generate significant heat due to the increasing power requirements of computer chips. New laptops with higher power requirements may produce even more heat," Sheynkin added.

A serious case of laptop burn was reported in a letter published in a medical journal two years ago after a 50-year-old man burned his penis while using a laptop balanced on his legs for an hour. *Reuters*

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Floss

I LIKE using waxed floss because it glides. My friend says unwaxed floss cleans better. Is he right?—Jackie A.

Floss, whether waxed or unwaxed, will do the job as long as it is used properly. The objective is to remove the plaque accumulation between the teeth. When you floss, you actually have two surfaces to clean: the one before and after. One advantage of the waxed floss is that it does not shred if you have a tight floss contact between your teeth.

E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.

Nutrition, physical activity program for kids launched

By Charles E. Buban

THERE was a time when children roamed freely on school grounds. Today, they have more periods of inactivity.

As a result, there is now a 0.8-percent increase in the proportion of overweight among 6- to 10-year-old schoolchildren, as revealed in the recent National Nutrition Survey of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute-Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST).

"We need to promote healthy and active lifestyle not only among adults but among schoolchildren as well," said Education Undersecretary Fe Hidalgo during the recent signing of a memorandum of agreement by the DepEd, FNRI-DOST and the Coca-Cola Co. for the implementation of a program called Kineti-Kids.

Kineti-Kids is a scientifically designed nutrition education and physical activity program for elementary schoolchildren that will be incorporated into the Physical Education and Health/Science subjects in elementary schools.

It seeks to promote positive change in the lives of the young through a balanced diet, proper hydration and physical activity.

Pilot in 4 schools

The pilot phase of this nationwide program will be implemented in four schools in Manila: two public schools (P. Gomez Elementary School and Justo Lukban Elementary School) and two private schools (Malate Catholic School and St. Anthony Catholic School).

The project will be funded through a P4-million grant from Coca-Cola, while FNRI-DOST will take the lead in the development, implementation and coordination of the program.

According to FNRI deputy director Rogelio Panlasaqui, the Kineti-Kids program is timely and relevant because it addresses the dual health problems of malnutrition and the growing incidence of childhood obesity worldwide.

Increased risk of disease

One in every 10 schoolchildren in the world is now overweight, and about 45 million have an increased risk of developing diabetes, heart disease and other illnesses before the age of 20, according to the first global assessment of child obesity.

The report, compiled by the International Obesity Task Force and submitted to the World Health Organization, estimates that at least 155 million children between the ages of 5 and 17, or about 10 percent of the total population, are overweight, while almost 45 million are obese.

"Overweight and obesity, together with other chronic diseases like hypertension, coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer, collectively termed as nutrition-related lifestyle diseases continue to increase in prevalence in our country. While these diseases mostly affect the adult population, studies have shown an increasing trend even among the younger population," said Panlasaqui.

2-year program

To fully document the program's effectiveness on the schoolchildren, close monitoring and evaluation will be done over a period of two years.

Coca-Cola Philippines public affairs and communications director Jose Bayani Baylon expressed hope that the program would raise the consciousness of elementary schoolchildren about the value of a healthy and active lifestyle.

"The project complements the current healthy lifestyle campaign of the Department of Health as implementation of a physical activity regimen at a young age can be an effective nutrition intervention to address the problem of overweight and obesity as well as other chronic diseases later in life," he said.

The reality behind the physics Olympiad

(First of two parts)

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

A FEW weeks ago we discussed Philippine performance in the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO). National Institute of Physics assistant professor Perry Esguerra, head training coach, writes:

Thank you for sharing your reflections on our country's participation in the IPhO. A concern raised was the apparently more successful results of our neighbors in Asia, such as Indonesia, Thailand, Taiwan and South Korea.

The IPhO is one of the most prestigious events in physics for preuniversity students, with two five-hour exams held on separate days to test the theoretical and experimental knowledge of the contestants.

The questions are at a level even very good third and fourth year physics majors in the best universities in the Philippines find challenging. I know this because I sometimes assign the Olympiad questions as problem sets, and after a week, students ask for an extension of the submission deadline .

We have been participating on and off in the IPhO since 1993, and in the Asian Physics Olympiad (APhO) more recently. A country is allowed five participants in the IPhO and eight in the APhO, but we have been sending less than the maximum number of participants in recent years.

Financial aid

At one time or another, our participants have received some form of financial assistance from the Department of Science and Technology, the Office of the Governor of Cavite, the Indonesian organizers of APhO 2000, the Thai organizers of APhO 2002, Glaxo-Smith Kline and the Samahang Pisika ng Pilipinas.

Many students would later on graduate with honors in our top universities, get awards such as the BPI Science Award, or scholarships in France, National University of Singapore, University of Tokyo and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Asian nations have been doing much better as a group compared to the European and the Latin American countries starting in the late 1990s. I believe it is more difficult to garner awards from the APhO than the IPhO.

From 1993 to 1997, the country sent 17 participants to IPhO: one in 1993, four in 1994, five in 1995, five in 1996 and two in 1997. No awards were won during this period.

We did not participate in 1998.

From 1999 onward, our participation became less regular due to financial difficulties. During this period we sent nine participants and we won an award every time we participated.

In 1999, we got a silver medal and an honorable mention in the 30th IPhO; in 2000, an honorable mention and the Unesco-Einstein Bronze Medal for the youngest prize-winner in the 1st APhO; in 2002 and 2003, three honorable mentions in the 33rd IPhO, 34th IPhO, and 4th APhO.

We did not participate in 2001 and this year, we also did not join the 35th IPhO and the 5th APhO.

Misleading list

The first impression we would get from viewing the Olympiad results in the Web is that the Philippines is doing poorly. However, this can be misleading because the only students listed in the rankings are those who won awards.

An honorable mention in the IPhO means that the student belongs to the top 36 percent to 60 percent of the participants, a silver medal to the top 18 percent.

In any Olympiad there is usually anywhere from five to 10 countries that do not bring home any award. An exact determination of our ranking based on average scores is not possible as the statutes of the Olympiads forbid the publication of the scores of students who failed to win awards.

But I would say that the Philippines is at worst among the top 60 percent and at best among the top 40 percent of participating countries in terms of average scores in all the Olympiads it has participated in since 1999.

Do you feel a lump in the balls?

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

WOMEN get a lot of reading materials on how to do a breast self-examination. This hopefully can detect early breast cancer, which afflicts one in every eight women. But it seems that advice for men to do a testicular self-examination—what some call checking one's balls—has not been as equally popular as doing a breast self-examination.

It's not that testicular cancer is not a serious concern. In fact, its prevalence is increasing and is usually detected late. Couple that with a man's sense of denial that something could ever be wrong with him and it can really spell a lot of trouble for the alpha male.

A lot of men take for granted a lump in their testicle or balls, just because the lump doesn't hurt. But a lump in the testicle is the first warning sign of a possible cancer.

Testicular cancer affects men at their prime. It is one of the most common types of cancer in men between the ages of 15 and 35. Self examination of the testicles is, therefore, a good preventive practice for men.

Examining the testicles can help detect testicular cancer in the early stages when it is highly curable. As testicular cancer usually presents no identifiable early symptoms, a testicular self-examination (TSE) should therefore begin at age 15 and continue until 40.

Regular checking of the testicles can help men familiarize themselves with the normal size and shape, as well as how their testicles look and feel, making it easier for them to feel any abnormalities in the future.

Steps for TSE

The best time to do a TSE is after a warm bath or shower because heat causes the skin of the scrotum to relax, making it easier to spot anything abnormal. The Testicular Cancer Resource Center recommends the following steps to be done monthly for early detection of testicular cancer:

- Stand in front of a mirror. Check for any swelling on the scrotal skin.
- Examine each testicle with both hands. Place the index and middle fingers under the testicle with the thumbs placed on top. Roll the testicle gently between the thumbs and fingers; you shouldn't feel any pain when doing the exam. Don't be alarmed if one testicle seems slightly larger than the other, that's normal.
- Find the epididymis, the soft, tube-like structure behind the testicle that collects and carries sperm. If you are familiar with this structure, you won't mistake it for a suspicious lump. Cancerous lumps are usually found on the sides of the testicle but can also show up on the front. Lumps on the epididymis are not cancerous.
- If you find a lump on your testicle, see a doctor, preferably a urologist, right away. The abnormality may just be an infection, but if it is testicular cancer, it will spread if not stopped through treatment. Waiting and hoping will not fix anything.

Note that free-floating lumps in the scrotum that are not attached in any way to a testicle are not testicular cancer. When in doubt, have it checked out.

Signs of cancer

It would be best to immediately check with a doctor if you see or feel any of the following signs that could possibly indicate testicular cancer.

- Any enlargement of a testicle
- Significant loss of size in one of the testicles
- Feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- Dull ache in the lower abdomen or in the groin
- Sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or the scrotum
- Enlargement or tenderness of the breast.

Initially, most testicular cancers are found through self-examination, either as a painless lump, a hardening or change in size of the testicle, or pain in the testicle.

Stages

Only a physician or a specialist can make a correct diagnosis of suspicious signs and symptoms of the disease. Don't be embarrassed to have yourself checked by a doctor once you observe or detect any problem.

Testicular cancer can be classified into three stages:

Stage 1. The cancer is confined to the testicle.

Stage 2. The cancer has spread to the retroperitoneal lymph nodes, which are located in the rear of the body below the diaphragm and between the kidneys.

Stage 3. The cancer has spread beyond the lymph nodes to remote sites in the body, including the lungs, brain, liver and bones.

Surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, surveillance or a combination of these can be used to treat testicular cancer.

How pregnant women can avoid overeating during the holidays

MANDY NAVASERO

A PREGNANT woman should be meticulous in watching what she eats.

By Rebecca B. Singson, MD
Contributor

THE HOLIDAY season, with its many parties where mouth-watering food is served, is challenging for people who want to maintain their weight. The season is doubly challenging for the pregnant woman who has an increased appetite and feels she has to eat for two people.

There could be serious consequences if a pregnant woman is not meticulous in watching what she eats. Too many calories and extra pounds can put a woman at a higher risk of pregnancy complications such as hypertension or diabetes, and may make labor and delivery more difficult.

If one gains weight beyond the prescribed amount, the chances of having a large baby also increases, which in turn may also increase the chances of ending up with a Cesarean section.

The most disturbing finding by researchers on weight gain during pregnancy is that women who gain more than 50 pounds and did not lose the excess weight after delivery can triple their risk of developing breast cancer after menopause. A weight gain of 40 pounds during pregnancy can still increase breast cancer risk by 40 percent.

A pregnant woman who eats moderately but still gains more than two lbs weekly should alert her obstetrician. Rapid weight gain, especially if associated with marked fluid retention, increase in blood pressure, and possibly protein in the urine, can be a marker for the onset of preeclampsia. This is a disorder that can be harmful, if not fatal, to the woman and her baby.

25 lbs is ideal

How much weight should a pregnant woman gain?

If one is of average weight, she should gain 25 lbs during pregnancy, and only two to four lbs of that should occur during the first trimester.

By 20 weeks, the woman should have gained seven to 10 lbs, and the remaining weight is added at a rate of about one-half pound to one lb per week after.

Underweight moms can afford to gain more weight, at least 28 to 40 pounds, so they don't end up with a low birth weight baby.

Where does all that weight go?
Baby: 7 lbs
Placenta: 1 lb
Amniotic fluid: 2 lbs
Blood volume: 4 lbs
Body fluids: 3 lbs
Uterus: 2 lbs
Breasts: 1 lb
Fat and Protein storage: 7 lbs

Tips

If you're pregnant and can't say no to those social obligations, here are some tips to help you keep your ideal weight:

- **Prioritize your requirements.** Make sure you meet your daily requirements first before you allow yourself the treats. Get your fill of salads and protein sources while filling your healthy carbohydrate requirements. Eat your fruit first before you hover over the dessert table. Hopefully, that would have killed your craving for pastries.
- **Avoid starving yourself.** It is difficult to control your appetite if you are ravenous when you arrive at a party. You are bound to eat everything in sight. So before you go to a party, have a nutritious snack like a granola or muesli bar, veggie sticks with yoghurt-garlic dip or some dried fruits and nuts.
- **Drink before you leap.** Gulp down a glass of water, fruit juice or some soup (preferably clear than creamed) to appease your grumbling insides and allow you to be more prudent in your choice of food.
- **Cheat sensibly.** If you must give in to your sweet tooth, at least make the wiser, more nutritious, lower calorie choice. An oatmeal or ginger cookie is better than a sponge cake or a fatty cheesecake.
- **Eat only small portions.** If you can't resist the cheesecake, have only a few small bites.
- **Burn what you eat.** Just because you are pregnant doesn't mean you can't exercise. As a rule, you can continue your exercises, dance or low-impact sports (swimming, golf, tennis doubles). Brisk walking for 20 minutes will raise your metabolism and cause you to burn calories faster.
- **Don't be a stress chomper.** Holidays can be stressful times especially when you have to socialize and beat your office deadlines at the same time. Resist the impulse to munch away your stress. Be prepared with your arsenal of anxiety-busters like yoga, meditation and massage instead of taking it out on food. (A word of caution though: the masseuse must have proper training or premature labor might be induced).

(The author is a fellow of the Philippine Obstetrics and Gynecologic Society and the Philippine Society of Cervical Pathology and Colposcopy.)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 10, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	3	3	3	3	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	24.75	24.75	24	24	2,973,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	51.5	51.5	50.5	51	704,900
China Banking Corp.	590	590	590	590	90
Citystate Savings Bank	17	17.25	17	17.25	6,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49	49	48.5	49	577,500
International Exch. Bank	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	1,123,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27	27	283,400
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	1,800
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	30.5	30.5	29	29	29,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.5	52,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	173	173	173	173	30
Manulife Financial Corp.	2505	2510	2505	2510	670
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	160,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	115	115	112	112	560
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1820	1820	1820	1820	1,380
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	42,800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.72	1.74	13,785,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	940	945	900	920	58,610
Ipeople Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.6	2.6	114,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.034	100,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	70,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.44	2.44	2,441,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1270	1270	1215	1215	265,300
Ivantage Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.7	0.7	6,400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.25	16.25	16	16	37,200
Manila Electric Co. B	26.5	26.5	25.5	26	898,000
Petron Corp.	3.1	3.1	3	3.05	3,842,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.8	3,119,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	153,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Cement Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	2	2	1.98	1.98	440,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	488,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32.5	32.5	32	32	73,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29	28.5	28.5	147,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	9,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	57	56.5	57	26,900
San Miguel Corp. B	75.5	75.5	75	75.5	33,000
Universal Robina Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,310,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.3	3,027,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3,292,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	12.75	11.5	12	77,500
A. Soriano Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.54	1.56	615,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	335,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1	1	45,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	16	16	16	16	17,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.69	0.7	22,930,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	1,000,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.225	1,500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.85	3.95	3.8	3.85	5,443,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	1,300,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	5	5	4.8	4.85	3,518,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	31.5	31.5	30.5	30.5	979,100
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	200,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.055	3,600,000
Ionics Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.4	1.4	66,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3	3	2.9	3	810,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.54	1.56	495,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	6,265,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	150,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	25,350,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	2,210,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	60,000
Wellex Industries, Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.61	0.61	8,970,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	560,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	630,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	18.75	18.75	18.25	18.5	245,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.7	7,397,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	20,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	2,740,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	1,500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	6,860,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.06	8,417,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	300,000
Primex Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	200,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	100,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.215	0.215	0.18	0.205	510,000
SM Development Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	680,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	23,314,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	389,500,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.55	3.55	3.5	3.5	40,000
Benguet Corp. A	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	33,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	60,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.24	6,530,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	17,410,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	287,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	353,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.0046	0.0046	112,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.53	8,010,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.63	0.63	0.62	0.63	13,760,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	260,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.01	7,200,000
Interport Res.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	2,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0036	0.0036	100,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	89,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	21,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.22	690,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	400,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	4,300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	320,000

New 'sin' tax . . .

From page B1

telecommunication firms, the government could afford to give up taxing telecom companies' windfall profits, the official said.

"The advocacy of the DOF should be for a taxation that is equitable and progressive," the official said, explaining that imposing a tax that would single out telecom companies could elicit questions on parity.

The source also noted that industry projections showed that in 2005, telecommunication companies would be paying P9 billion in taxes, an already substantial contribution to the coffers of the cash-starved government.

CURRENCIES

December 10, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.750976	1.000000	56.1640
Japan	Yen	0.007181	0.009562	0.5370
United Kingdom	Pound	1.446005	1.925500	108.1438
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.096586	0.128614	7.2235
Switzerland	Franc	0.653136	0.869716	48.8467
Canada	Dollar	0.614296	0.817996	45.9419
Singapore	Dollar	0.456049	0.607275	34.1070
Australia	Dollar	0.565878	0.753523	42.3209
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.992032	2.652590	148.9801
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.200261	0.266667	14.9771
Brunei	Dollar	0.454669	0.605437	34.0038
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.018933	0.025211	1.4160
UAE	Dirham	0.204498	0.272309	15.2940
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.331600	74.7880
Argentina	Peso	0.252641	0.336417	18.8945
Brazil	Real	0.269989	0.359518	20.1920
Denmark	Kroner	0.134581	0.179208	10.0650
India	Rupee	0.017021	0.022665	1.2730
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.197652	0.263193	14.7820
Mexico	New Peso	0.066650	0.088751	4.9846
New Zealand	Dollar	0.531702	0.708015	39.7650
Norway	Kroner	0.121163	0.161340	9.0615
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012664	0.016863	0.9471
South Africa	Rand	0.129200	0.172043	9.6626
Korea	Won	0.000712	0.000948	0.0532
Sweden	Kroner	0.111362	0.148289	8.3285
Syria	Pound	0.014467	0.019264	1.0819
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023352	0.031095	1.7464
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000392	0.000522	0.0293

Stocks end at 1-month low

STOCKS fell to a one-month low yesterday, led by telecom firms, on rising worries about the fate of fiscal reforms in Congress and a possible credit-rating downgrade by Moody's.

Traders said the market may post a technical rebound next week after falling 3.5 percent this week.

The Philippine stock index lost 40.21 points, or 2.24 percent, to end at 1,753.47, its lowest close since Nov. 12. Turnover climbed to P1.09 billion from P901.5 million on Thursday. Foreign brokerages were net sellers of P90.36 million.

"Players are fearful of a downgrade by Moody's," said Monique Lecaros, dealer at SB Equities Inc.

Moody's Investor Service, which ended a one-week review of the country on Wednesday, is reportedly mulling over a two-notch cut of the country's credit rating in February due to the failure by the government to pass key tax bills.

The US-based ratings firm, which cut the Philippines' long-term currency rating to Ba2 from Ba1 in January and maintained its negative outlook, last month put Philippine sovereign debt—already two notches below investment grade—on notice for another ratings cut.

Moody's also placed Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Globe Telecom—the country's top two operators—as well as 11 major banks on notice for a ratings cut.

Blue chip PLDT lost 4.33 percent or P55 to P1,215, its lowest close in four-and-a-half months, hit by an expected P2-billion foreign exchange loss this year due to changes in accounting procedure, a proposed franchise tax on telecom firms and the possible ratings cut by Moody's.

Globe Telecom lost 2.65 percent or P25 to P920.

Bank of the Philippine Islands, the country's second-largest lender, fell 1.92 percent or P1 to P51.

Its main rival Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. fell 3.57 percent or P1 to P27.

The conclusion of the review by Moody's is widely awaited after London-based ratings agency Fitch cut its outlook on Philippine sovereign debt to negative from stable, bringing it into line with Moody's.

President Macapagal Arroyo has proposed eight revenue bills to help the cash-poor government, but none has yet been passed into law by Congress. *Reuters*

DISCLOSURES

FILINVEST Land Inc. confirmed reports that the company expects a 20-percent sales growth in 2005 from this year's level. The company is also setting aside around P1 billion to P1.2 billion to finance its capital expenditures next year.

* * *

ASIAN Terminals Inc. concluded an agreement with Standard Chartered Bank and a group of financial institutions for a fixed and floating rate peso-denominated notes facility amounting P1 billion.

* * *

THE BOARD of directors of **CADP Group Corp.** elected Pedro E. Roxas as executive chair and Miguel A. Gaspar as president and CEO of the company.

* * *

THE BOARD of directors of **PNOC Exploration Corp.** accepted the resignations of Milagros Reyes and Silvestre Bello III as directors of the company. Elected as their replacements were Jose Armando Melo and Crismel Verano.

* * *

SALCON Power Corp. disclosed that Atty. Augusto W. Go, who resigned as an independent director of the company last Oct. 31, reconsidered his resignation. He consented to stay until the next regular election of directors to be held in April 2005.

Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

SM Prime sees 16% revenue growth

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MALL developer SM Prime Holdings Inc. said it expected a 15-16 percent growth in revenues in the first 10 months of 2004 as contributions from its new malls started to pitch in.

SM Prime chief finance officer Jose Sio said after a forum by the Philippine Business for Social Progress at the Peninsula Manila late Thursday that the mall group expected net income to grow 10 percent during the 10-month period.

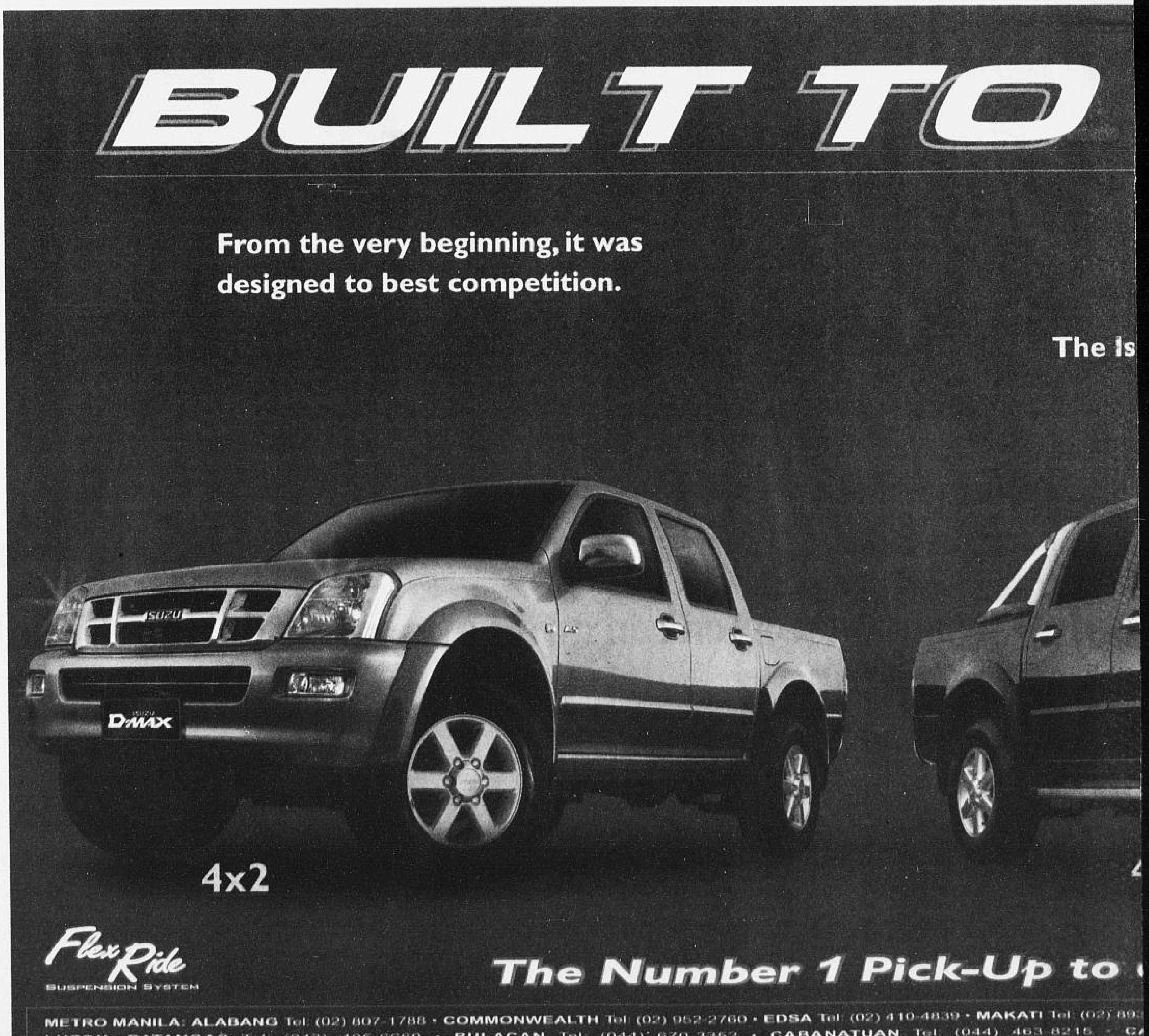
For the nine-month period, net income climbed 10 percent to P3.37 billion from P3.07 billion. Gross revenues jumped 16 percent to P7.44 billion from January to September.

Sio said the new SM malls in Lucena, Baguio City, Dasmariñas and Batangas City were expected to push earnings higher.

The official also said that SM Prime would launch four malls next year. Sio said they were targeting to open their first mall in Laguna by 2006.

For a mall of about 70,000 to 80,000 square meters, the projected size of the Laguna mall, SM Prime is expected to spend roughly P1 billion.

Fil-Estate Properties Inc. earlier agreed to lease a 5.8-hectare property in San Pablo City, Laguna, to SM Prime.



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Check out the 2005 DMAX on display at the Glorietta

DBP sets aside P50B for energy projects

By Abigail L. Ho

TO ENCOURAGE the development and use of renewable energy resources in the country, the Development Bank of the Philippines has earmarked P50 billion to fund renewable energy projects, particularly wind power projects.

Reynaldo David, DBP president, said the bank was willing to offer thinner spreads on loans to firms interested in developing clean power generation.

According to David, most wind power projects now are struggling to be viable.

He said such projects entailed huge investments while lenders would charge large interest rates on loans.

David cited as an example the DBP interest rate on such loans.

The current 9.75 percent that the bank charged included a 4-percent spread. Other interest rate components included the cost of fund (0.75 percent), guarantee fee (one percent) and foreign exchange (4 percent).

All components of the interest rate could not be touched, David said, except for the 4-percent spread that the bank charged.

But David said the DBP was willing to bring this spread down to only 2 percent to help make wind power projects more viable.

"The DBP is willing to take on a thinner spread, but there should be a realistic tariff structure to reflect the all-in cost," he said.

He added that for wind power projects to be viable, the bulk of the project cost should come from overseas development assistance (ODA) loans and grants instead of commercial loans that charged high interest rates.

The ideal mix, he said, was 70 percent ODA, 20 percent grant and 20 percent equity.

Multilateral lenders like the World Bank, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, German development bank Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau, Asian Development Bank and Danish lending institution Danida should all be considered as possible funding sources for entities wanting to go into the renewable energy business.

The Department of Energy last Thursday signed pre-commercial contracts with three firms for the development of six potential wind sites identified in the country's Wind Power Investment Kit.

Donors urged to stop funding coal plants

By Christine A Gaylican

THE MILITANT environment group Greenpeace International has urged multilateral lender Asian Development Bank (ADB) to halt funding for coal-fired power plant projects throughout Asia.

In a recent meeting with the ADB, nongovernment organizations and leaders of communities where coal-power facilities are situated, Greenpeace asked the bank to be more cautious in approving loans for such projects, especially if there was strong opposition in the area where the facilities would be constructed.

"The ADB and other international funding institutions, along with governments, must shift investments from fossil fuel projects, like coal power plants, and ensure the widespread uptake of renewable energy projects to change the current trajectory of global climate change," said Jasper Inventor, Climate Campaigner of Greenpeace Southeast Asia.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has pointed out that developing countries in Southeast Asia are expected to suffer most from climate change in terms of loss of life and effects on the economy. Extreme weather events such as strong typhoons, flooding, landslides, and droughts will occur more frequently and with greater severity.

Greenpeace noted that despite local opposition, the ADB had bankrolled the construction of the 1,200-MW coal-fired power plant in Sual, Pangasinan, and the 400-MW plant in Masinloc, Zambales.

Earlier, Greenpeace urged local communities being eyed as sites for coal-fired power plants, to reject plans to build the facilities in their areas.

In a Greenpeace forum held last week, community leaders from different parts of the Philippines and Thailand gathered in Manila to forge alliances and warn others of their tragic experiences in hosting coal-fired power plants.

According to the group, coal is the single largest source of global carbon dioxide emissions, the main greenhouse gas responsible for global warming and climate change.

Under the Department of Energy's 2004-2013 Philippine Energy Plan, the country's coal demand is expected to increase by 6.3 percent.

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Aquaboard tapped for shrimp testing

THE BUREAU of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources recently designated the Fisheries and Aquaculture Board (Aquaboard) as official observer to the upcoming vannamei (Pacific white shrimp) testing to be conducted at the government facility in Bonoan, Pangasinan.

Vannamei is a fresh water shrimp widely accepted in the world market. It was previously banned in the country for fear of contaminating local shrimp species.

According to Lourdes R. Tanco, Aquaboard chair, they are confident that the testing will be concluded within 45 days without compromising the protocol in handling and culture of specific pathogen free stocks.

She said that within two months from introduction of the imported broodstock, mature stocks will result in four spawnings—enough time to determine if vannamei is safe.

Once it has been determined that the shrimp is safe, "an estimated 20,000 hectares of fishponds are expected to adopt vannamei for growout operations," an Aquaboard official said. "This translates to 20,000 jobs in growout farms alone."

Vannamei was responsible for the revival of the shrimp industry in China, making it the third largest exporter in the world, with 800,000 metric tons as against the Philippines' export of 8,000 metric tons.

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Globe Kababayan expands AutoloadMAX worldwide

THESE days, most Filipinos have a loved one living or working abroad - maybe a mother in Taiwan, a brother in the US, or a friend in UK. For these Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), the mobile phone is their only connection to the family they left behind, a source of comfort in an unfamiliar land. This fervent need for connectivity propels Globe Kababayan, Globe Handyphone's service arm for the OFW community, to intensify its efforts to provide the mobile services that OFWs and their families have come to rely on.

After the recent success of the award-winning Share-a-Load value transfer service in Hong Kong and Japan, Globe Kababayan marks another milestone with the enhancement and expansion of its overseas reloading facilities. With the help of service providers Paysetter, Inc. and Ventaja International, AutoloadMAX now reaches more Filipinos across the globe, in countries such as Taiwan, Saipan , Guam, the United States and the United Kingdom on top of the current channels in Hong Kong and Singapore. In addition to allowing OFWs to conveniently reload the Globe Prepaid and Touch Mobile phones of their loved ones in the Philippines in denominations of P150, P300, P500 and P1000, the new web-based AutoloadMAX facility operated by accredited retailers globally lets them send a personalized message to go with their purchased prepaid credits!

Using AutoloadMAX abroad is as easy as reloading prepaid credits back home. All an OFW has to do is go to any retail establishment carrying AutoloadMAX, pay the desired amount in the equivalent foreign denomination, and indicate the recipient's mobile phone number and corresponding personal message. The retailer then uses the AutoloadMAX web-based facility to process the transaction and in just a few seconds, sends the load and accompanying text to the intended recipient in the Philippines. Once the transaction has been completed, a confirmation message appears on the retailer's computer screen, thus assuring the sender that the load has indeed been sent.

Over-the-air reloading services like AutoloadMAX ensure the seamless communication that OFWs crave from their loved ones. And with Globe Kababayan's continued expansion of the AutoloadMAX service to more destinations in the coming months, OFWs will now feel a little closer to home, no matter how far they may be.

PLDT, EXPORTBANK CONTRACT SIGNING
ExportBank recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with PLDT for the nationwide provision of Domestic Frame Relay (DFR) with Managed Routers through PLDT Business Solutions. PLDT Brains DFR is a managed networking solution that transfers data or non-data traffic at speeds ranging from 64K to 2MB. It runs on the country's first Cisco-Powered Network that employs Cisco's MGX and BPX switches to provide high-performance connections. Shown in photo (from left) are: Katrina C. Luna, PLDT-business head; Ernesto R. Alberto, PLDT SVP and corporate business group head; Jose Ma. Valdes, ExportBank chief information officer; and Michael Asiddao, ExportBank technical operations division head.

Koblinger, 2005 Lions Direct Jury president

FRED Koblinger, CEO, BBDO Holding Austria and managing director, Palla Koblinger Proximity, has been appointed the 2005 Lions Direct Jury president. Undoubtedly one of the pioneers of Direct Marketing in Austria, he has spoken at over 40 direct marketing conferences in 14 countries around the world and was twice a jury member in Cannes. He founded Palla, Koblinger and Partners (PKP) in 1991, Austria's top relationship marketing agency, with a worldwide reputation for its creative output. Commenting on his appointment, Fred said "Cannes is always a thrilling place for me - whether it be hunting for a lion - like so many others - or fighting for creative excellence on a jury. Winning a lion was always great and the experiences as a jury member have always been incredibly valuable. This invitation to become President of the Lions Direct Jury is truly fantastic and is the highlight of more than 20 years striving for creative excellence in DM. I am looking forward to Cannes 2005.

PJ Pereira is 2005 Cyber Lion Jury president

CANNES International Advertising festival announced that PJ Pereira, vice president and creative director of AgênciaClick, Brazil, will be the 2005 Cyber Lions Jury president. Leading 15 worldwide interactive leaders and with 16 years experience in the interactive industry, PJ has been a judge and jury chairman at many international awards, including Cannes, One Show, Clio, LIAA and El Sol. He has won numerous awards including 13 Cyber Lions, a Cyber Lion Grand Prix in 2000, eight Pencils in the One Show, one Grand Prix and five Golds at the London International Advertising Awards. Commenting on his appointment, PJ said "Being asked to be the president of the jury in the most dynamic category of the most respected Festival is not only a great honor. It's also the biggest responsibility a creative can receive. After all, the choices the Cannes judges will make in June will be the main reference and inspiration for the whole industry for the next twelve months."

REDISCOVERING YSA
YSA Botanica Papaya Soap recently held a lunch press con for their media friends at the Linden Suites in Ortigas. The occasion was a way to re-introduce YSA Botanica Papaya soap to the media and public. Special Gift Packages and Gift Certificates from YSA Botanica were given away that day to all the media friends and guests. Marosa Soap and Cosmetic Laboratories Inc is the manufacturer of the YSA Botanica Papaya Soap. Shown are Joy Conanan, YSA skin care brand manager; Karen Raymundo, YSA Botanica brand manager; Sheila Nazal; Dr. Nazal; Zenda Cabangon (YSA Botanica PR consultant; September Mahino; Nikki Domingo, Working Mom Beauty editor; Tess Ramirez, Image International Magazine marketing director.

Silent no more: Osteoporosis bared

OSTEOPOROSIS -the "silent disease" that causes bones to weaken and break - is silent no more. In the recently concluded Osteoporosis Awareness Week Celebration last Oct. 17 at Market! Market! the illness got its much-needed day in the limelight. Presented by Anlene Hi-Calcium Milk, the celebration aptly dubbed "Love Your Bones" spearheaded the information campaign as a pioneering effort in the fight against Osteoporosis.

The people who graced the activity were informed about the debilitating bone disease in the day-long program which included bone screening and consultations and lectures facilitated by doctors who are members of the Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines Foundation Inc (OSPFI). The highlight of the event was an on-stage program hosted by TV actress/broadcaster Ali Sotto. The program featured talks by (OSPFI rep's name here) the (position) of the OSPFI. The activity forms part of Anlene's thrust in promoting prevention as the best way to avoid Osteoporosis. A healthy lifestyle, good diet, sufficient intake of Anlene Hi-Calcium Milk and early detection of the disease thru bone screening are effective methods for avoiding the said illness which commonly affects women. This disease is caused primarily by a lack of calcium in the body which then causes the bones to weaken.

In today's world where everything we do and eat affects our bodies in one way or the other, it is comforting to know that there are still some things that are actually good for us. Anlene, the only clinically-proven milk product in the market today, is one such example. Anlene Hi-Calcium Milk strengthens bones to help prevent osteoporosis. It comes in chocolate flavor as well. So drink up for healthy bones and join Anlene's campaign - eat healthy, live right, and love your bones!

ProductFILES

Power steering made effortless with Prestone

Prestone
Power Steering Fluid

POWER steering becomes effortless with the new Prestone Power Steering Fluid, America's number one power steering fluid. This innovative product from Prestone, the Philippines' top brake fluid, protects against pump breakdown caused by wear, oxidation and foaming. Prestone Power Steering Fluid contains Antiwear Agents that effectively protect pump components; antioxidants that prevent sludge formation; seal swell agent which protects and rejuvenates seals; antifoam agents that prevent pump cavitation and steering loss; corrosion inhibitors which protect metal components; and pour point depressants for good low temperature steering. For more than 70 years, the Prestone name has guaranteed customers the highest quality products all over the world. The brand encompasses a full line of high-performance coolants, brake fluids, cleaners, and car care products, known for their performance edge that satisfies individual market needs.

dti

NOTICE TO ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRANTS

PURSUANT TO SECTION 12 (A) OF DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO 15 SERIES OF 1990, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY THROUGH THE BUREAU OF TRADE REGULATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, CANCELS FROM THE RECORD ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATIONS WHICH EXPIRED AS OF JUNE 30, 2004 EFFECTIVE JANUARY 3, 2005.

UNDER THE BUSINESS NAME LAW (ACT NO 3883), AS AMENDED, OWNERS OR PROPRIETORS SHOULD RENEW THEIR BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATION UPON EXPIRATION THEREOF.

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SERVES AS A FORMAL NOTICE TO ALL CONCERNED
FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE.
11 December 2004, Makati City.

(Sgd) Asst. Dir. Jaimo Lasaro L. Olmos
Caretaker, BTRCP

(PDI–Dec. 11, 2004)

PNBGEN HONORS LOYALTY AWARDEES
THE PNB General Insurers Co Inc, the non-life insurance subsidiary of the Philippine National Bank, recently celebrated its 13th anniversary at the PNB Financial Center along President Diosdado Macapagal Blvd, Pasay City. Highlight of the celebration was the Recognition Day Program wherein loyalty awardees received their plaques of appreciation for their unstinting dedication to duty. This year's 10-year loyalty awardees who received their awards from PNB president and CEO Lorenzo Tan, PNBGen president and CEO Jose Zuniga and PNBGen chair Cielo Macapagal-Salgado (far left, sixth from left and far right, respectively) were (second from left): Francisco Francisco, Ninfa Piccio, Erna Ramiro, Arthur Bulan, Sebastian Zulueta, Nemia Lucas, Rodel Ilustre and Gabriel Cocal.

Bits & Clips

Photo contest

A PHOTO contest has been launched by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare Development. Dubbed "Building Families of Character for a Strong Republic" the photo tilt is open to all amateur and professional photographers. Among objectives of the photo tilt is to increase public awareness of the celebration of the Year of the Family which culminates today. Entries can be submitted at DSWD Social Technology Bureau, front Batasan Complex, Quezon City. For details contact FPPF at 813-7424/843-5341.

Adamson's new president

ADAMSON University's old tradition and new beginnings was affirmed when Fr. Gregg Bañaga Jr. CM delivered an address during his investiture as 5th president of the university yesterday. Fr. Bañaga's investiture was witnessed by the Vicentian community and distinguished guests.

TheatreNow presents 'Laro'

THEATERNOW, the laboratory arm of Gantimpala (GTF), presents its 2004 season ender with Laro, an adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's provocative masterpiece Laronde, set in the Victorian period. Last play date is today (2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Tanghalang Huseng Batute, Cultural Center of the Philippines. For tickets and sponsorship, call the GTF marketing office at 899-5745/896-3503.

Pet show at SM Megamall

A DOG show and pet caring seminars by the National Pitbull Terrier Club is one of the highlights of the upcoming Mega Christmas Fair, Garden and Pet Show 2004 at Mega Trade Hall 2, SM Megamall on Dec. 10 to 12. Part of the proceeds of the event will go to God's Special Children Inc and Filipino Entrepreneurs Dev't Foundation. For inquiries, call Ex-Link Management and Marketing Services Corp at 643-3887, 643-7780, 640-6439.

UNIVERSITY OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC PARTNERS WITH HP
One of the top universities in the country today, University of Asia and the Pacific expands its IT education program by recently partnering with HP Philippines. Aiming to produce capable and competent IT professionals in the future, HP and UA&P are providing the facilities as well as the training of SAP ABAP/4 programming language to its 4th year Information Technology students for the first semester of school year 2004-2005. Signing the agreement are (from left): Jill Olazo, section manager for HP services, Asia Pacific; and Dr. Josemaria Mariano, UA&P president. Witnessing the partnership are the students from UA&P; Arthur Cua (2nd from left), systems analyst, HP Phils and Eman Antonio (3rd from left); systems analyst, HP Phils.

BODYPOINTE BALLET CENTRE HOLDS CONCERT
BodyPointe Ballet Centre recently held their yearly ballet concert entitled 'Babes on Broadway' last Dec. 5 at Fr. James Reuter Theater, St. Paul University, Quezon City. Highlights of the show featured ballet students performing Broadway musical hits. The show was choreographed by BodyPointe dance director Brezhnev Larlar and associate dance directress Dr. Pamela Ortiz-Bondoc.

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VILLA ANGELICA LA274m² FA157m² 4br 3tb P1.7M Vic 8903461 loc 27

MALABON

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PARANAQUE

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PASIG

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QUEZON CITY

Capitol Golf Hills Subd NR AYALA HTS 0917-5325440

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS choice lots w/ view, Sweden & Finland St avble 426-5650, 929-1832 • 0919-8212235

OTHER AREAS

TOWN & COUNTRY HILLS LA240m² P3,125/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

BAGUIO

KINGSTOWN Subd. La Trinidad LA512m² 2.8M neg. 7579116/ 0917-9635642 DBO.

BATANGAS

RANCHO VISTA SUBD LA613m2 P2,284/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

BULACAN

SAN MIGUEL BUL 4000m² P180/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

CAVITE

150m² 3K/m² 30%DP bal 5yrs Del 4543135

DON BOSCO EXEC HTS LA128m2 P2,900/m2 Vic 8903461 loc 27

Metrogate Ph2 Dasma 120m² @P3,200 09178439799;9136105

Molino Rd nr SM 2ha.@ 400m² 439-6462 0920-9051246

PARKPLACE SUBD LA120m² P5,750/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

PARKPLACE SUBD LA149.30m² P6,028/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

ST. CHARBEL DASMA nr SM 371m² P2,650/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

CAMELLA HOMES BACOOR LA137m² FA198.90m² 5br P1.7M Vic 8903461 loc 27

LAGUNA

SOUTH PEAK P5,000/m2 LA240m2 Vic 8903461 loc 25/27

FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

SAN MIGUEL BUL 4000m² P180/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

31 Mactan St 2 stry 3BRW/A/C 35K c Alan 818-4277

MANDALUYONG

2Brms w 2TB in Private Compound Ask 4 Mandy at 538-92-25 or 0917-8340519

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

180 sqm Bungalow 3BR 3T&B 2Mdrm. 1 Car Garage Loc. at 27 Coronado Subd. Makaturing St., Mand. City /2 mos. dep. + 1mon. advance P20T /mon Pls. call at 631-7229 / 532-5718

QUEZON CITY

3BR SERRAMONTE VILLAS FILINVEST2 0917-7185116 JUN

Tndng Sora 2sty 3BR3TB big grge P35T/mo. 2mos. advnce & 2 mos. dpst 0917-8997547

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Mkt.Studio 9T FF/AC/Prk 8906331

MANILA

BAYBRIDEG HOMES NR NAGTAHAN BRIDGE 9289541/7361925

PASAY

PARK AVE 6.5T 1Br Leony 5511340 / 0918-9054127

QUEZON CITY

PHILAM HOMES FRNT EDSA QC Bldg 2 UNT 7 9289541 7361925

SAN JUAN

Ghills FF Stu P11T 929-9835

APARTMENT

MANILA

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2401A Laura St. Pandacan 10K Comm'l Alan 818 - 4277

2BR w/grg 5636296/5610197

MANDALUYONG

32 Bulalakaw St. back Mun. Hall Call 5342838/6585656

PASAY

2BR Cuenca 8315026/5500254

QUEZON CITY

15T Good Location w/AC Big Rooms Garage 938-0816

2BIG BR 2TB PROJECT 8 P7,500 ONLY 4536359

2BR Big 15T 09273168891

Comml acceptable business Internet cafe, comptr cntr, gen merchndse / Res apts bldg studio type accessible 2 all pts comml area standard size affordable grge outside but safe Call for an appointment 9254841 ; 4356336

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Crafts Factory w/20 workers along KALAYAAN JP RIZAL or EDSA MAKATI Call Kilusan 882-2726. Monthly Rental P18,000.00

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Ms. Corazon Cordova

ROOM & BOARD

1BR w/AC TB Mkt 8992148

Mkt.Condo M/F Nice/Prkg 8979417

BEDSPACE

LDY Bedspace 1339 Quirino cor. Lanuza Paco T5636618 ; 09178938557

Male 1.5 Pasay 8315026

Mkti nr Ayala P1T Ldy 7257342

Nw studio lady 3.5T 9137513

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BURGUNDY PLAZA KATIPUNAN Q.C. FRNT ATENEO FA103, 75 & 50 m² 9289541 / 7361925 IDEAL FOR SPA GYM CALL CENTER

Dental Clinic For Sale/Lease Rm224 Atrium Bldg Makati •811-4071/823-6047•

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2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSINES DOCTOR 524-3197

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REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

MALATE MLA 526-8048/49

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

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OTHER REAL ESTATE

REALTORS/SEMINAR

BROKERS CEP 4382966

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CARS

FORD

93 T. Corolla GLI 5216227

FORD XP RUSH 675T •851-5070/0918-9432573•

HONDA

02 Civic VTI 555T a/t 9254566

MERCEDES

'89 260E 550T 3717026

96 BENZ E230 35Th Km Black 2-Tone Like New All Orig W/ Sunroof P1.5M See To Appreciate Call 0920-9040510

MITSUBISHI

04 Adventure GLX 135TD/P B-new Cell 0917-6206816

'95 Glnt A/T P195T 647-1304

GALANT VR6 94 RUSH SALE 0915-4638899

QC area GLXI 95" Good Cond. Manhatan Gray Flooded 2727813

NISSAN

Cefiro A/T 340T neg 4267915

OPEL

2001 OPEL VECTRA 2.0 A/T Blue / 32T Kms. P480kNEG RICKY 09178398885

TOYOTA

00 Revo SR a/t 475T 9254566

01 GLI 1.6 A/T 390T 9254566

01 GLI 1.6 M/T 370T 4267915

Rush Sale! 93 Tyta GLI 09192197301

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

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MOTORCYCLE

POCKETBIKES 33T DUCATTI LOOK 09182130140

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

Vans / Coaster 5344003 6313496

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

NISSAN ESC. STAREX 8276605

P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

REVO w/driver 9272821

Toyco U Drive w/ Driver All Kinds Cars Van Revo Dly. Wk.Mo. Rental 8023021-22

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1.5% CAR LOAN 534-4441

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o Taking Car 5315577

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081

2% w/out taking car 6567685

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BILLIARDS

26T New Complt Sr Imptd 7787507

Sale/Rental/Service 8014494

BUY/SELL

College Plans 0917-7939632

FURNITURE/ FIXTURES

CRSTL CHANDLR 09275444060

HEALTH & BEAUTY

ANTI-ASTHMA 0917-8451373

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT ELITE PIANO CENTER Almost New:TERMS-7213124

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-4660443

Ostrich 4 sale (0918)2932807

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of late GREGORIO N. PANDES was extrajudicially settled among the heirs as per Doc.5658 Page 13 Book 477 Series of 2003 before Notary Public Jose L. Ma. Santos of Quezon City
PDI-Dec.4,11&18, 2004

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FAUSTINO CRUZ was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc15; Page 3; Book 90; Series of 2004 by Notary Public Jose L. Sta Ana of Marikina City.
(PDI- Dec. 11, 18, 25, '04)

AUCTION SALE

CY LOPEZ
PAWNSHOP INC.
CAEG Bldg. #7611 Dela Rosa St.,Makati City #602 JP Rizal St. Makati City #15 Gen. Santos Ave. lower Bicutan Taguig Real St. Almanza Uno Las Pinas City will hold an Auction Sale on DECEMBER 18, 2004 at 9:00am including all items pawned up to JULY 2004.
- V. Zamora Jr. lic. Auctioneer.
(PDI - December 11, 2004)

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CWS

"Great People
Great Company"

Key Account Manager

CWS Philippines aims to rapidly consolidate our position as the number one commercial hygiene service provider in the industry. Our industry is competitive and aggressive. Success comes to those who are great time managers and have excellent account management skills.

Role Purpose
To grow and secure a designated portfolio of customers through additional sales of CWS services following the principles outlined in the CWS "Selling A Service" Manual. To prospect for additional customer sales through a structured prospecting plan and CWS cold calling techniques.

Quantitative Key Measurement

- Responds to internal & external customer requests within 24 hours
- Budget achievement - monthly
- Ensure planning tools are in place and used for effective sales & prospecting production rates
- Ensure all activities are aligned to all CWS sales & service manuals

Qualitative Key Measurement

- Ensures that there is a minimum of four existing customer surveys per day
- Ensures that there is a minimum of four cold calls per day
- Sells to the price list. Discounts require approval
- Ensure all CWS corporate identity requirements are met

Core competencies

- Demonstrated high level of sales activity in a service industry
- Demonstrated high level of prospecting activity
- History of selling solutions to problems
- Sales educated by recognized institution
- Leads the sales from the front & "hands on"
- Manage personal sales productivity & performance criteria

Personal Qualities

- Builds respect, trust and pride within customer base
- Sense of humor
- Open, honest & empathetic
- Detailed approach
- Outgoing personality, friendly approach and optimistic

Our organisation provides an environment that rewards achievement, innovation and team spirit. Interested individuals are invited to send their resume complete with relevant particulars, current and expected salary, together with a recent passport-sized photograph (n.r.) via mail or email to:

MISS SUSAN STA. MARIA
Human Resource Manager
PRIMEPOINT Management Services, Inc.
Unit 503 Regina Bldg.,100 Aguirre St.
Legaspi Village, Makati City
Email- whatcanwedoforyou@primepoint.com.ph
Tel No. 830-0679; 830-0646
Fax No. 830-0785
Closing Date: December 15, 2004

CWS

"Great People
Great Company"

Dynamic Sales Consultant

CWS Philippines aims to rapidly consolidate our position as the number one commercial hygiene service provider in the industry. Our industry is competitive and aggressive. Success comes to those who are great time managers and have excellent selling skills.

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Legaspi Village, Makati City
Email- whatcanwedoforyou@primepoint.com.ph
Tel No. 830-0679; 830-0646
Fax No. 830-0785
Closing Date: December 15, 2004

Call for nominations for 2005 Kapatid Awards

ECOP is now accepting nominations for the 2005 Kapatiran sa Industriya (Kapatid) Awards.

The Kapatid Awards is a biennial awards activity of ECOP established in 1995, which recognizes companies that have excelled in the field of industrial relations,, quality and productivity, social accountability, and strategic visioning and job preservation. Essentially, these practices are characterized by closer enterprise level cooperation between management and employees, whether in a unionized or non-unionized setting.

The 2005 Kapatid Awards Executive Committee is chaired by ECOP Vice President Rene E. Cristobal. Judging will be based on the following: industrial peace and harmony (30%), productivity and quality (30%), social accountability (20%), and strategic visioning and partnering for business and survival (20%). The awarding ceremonies will be one of the highlights of the 26th National Conference of Employers slated on April 2005.

The 2003 Grand Kapatid Award was bagged by Indo Phil Group of Companies. The other awardees in that year were United Laboratories *(Special Citation for Industrial Peace and Harmony)*, Unilever Philippines *(Special Citation for Productivity and Quality)*, Avon Cosmetics *(Special Citation for Social Accountability)*, Philex Mining Corporation *(Special Citation for Strategic Visioning and Job Preservation)*, Chimes Enterprises *(Special Citation for Industrial Peace and Harmony, SME Category)*, Anjo Farms *(Special Citation for Productivity and Quality, SME Category)*, and Buena Mano Crafts *(Special Citation for Strategic Visioning and Job Preservation, SME Category)*.

Deadline for submission of nominations is on January 15, 2005. For more information, please call Ecop's Research and Advocacy Department at 890-48-45. 890-48-47, 899-04-11 or e-mail: research@ecop.org.ph

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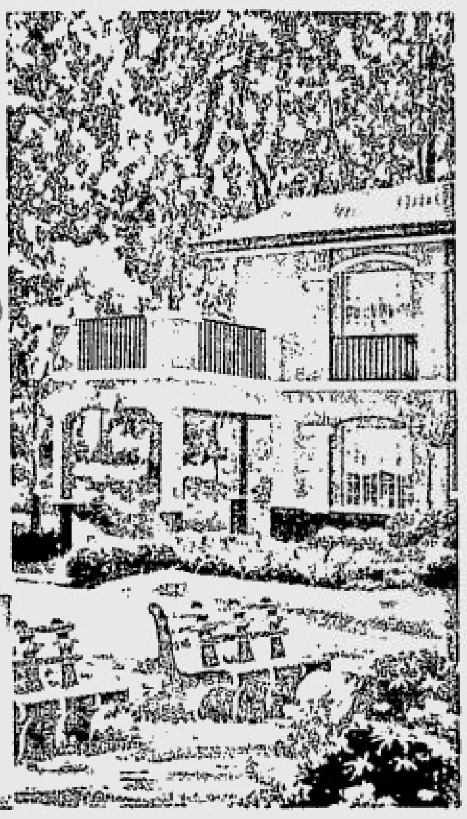
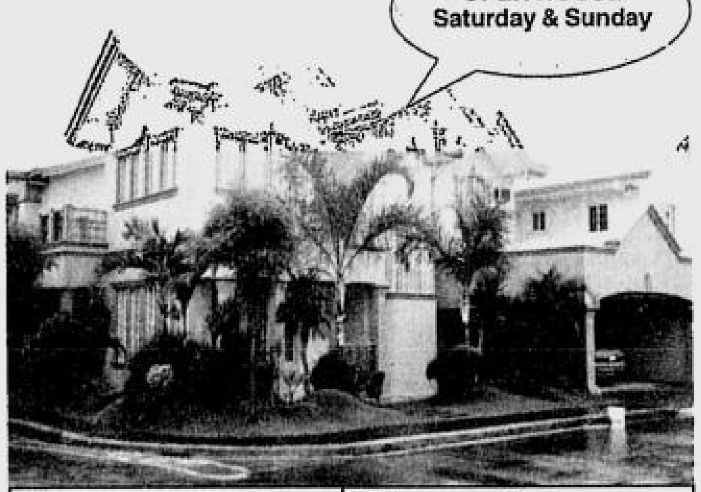


QUEZON CITY

ONE VERMONT EXECUTIVE PLACE

LAST FEW ELEGANT UNITS LEFT!!!



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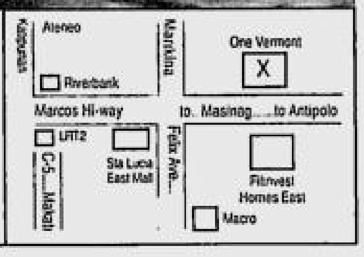

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Cubao N.Y. Anapolis 9122194

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HOUSE & LOT

QUEZON CITY

LA336m² Old Hse 7K/m² Del 4543135

P5.5M Bnew nr Cong. Ave 5BR 4TB attic 2CG #5 Narra St. Violago Phase3 Visayas Ave & 2.8M T. Sora nr U.P. 9322050 / 09228008313

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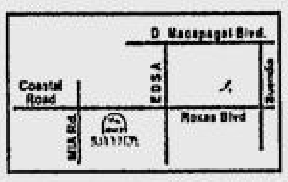

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We, the family of the late

Consolidacion Morales Martinez

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you, who, by way of your presence, prayers, flowers, mass cards and messages of sympathy, offered us solace and comfort.

Special thanks to the Martinez, Mayor,
Morales, Obidos, Quimpo and Young families, and
Inday's best friend Telly Quimpo,
for the love, concern and support
in our time of bereavement.

I am
the way,
the truth
and the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.

John 14:6

EXCELSO V. ORIAS

Retiree of United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on December 9, 2004
at the age of 61.

His body lies in state at 22 Jose Ma. Hugo St., Project 4, Quezon City.

Interment to be announced later.

In Loving Memory of

MARIA M. QUILINO-FLORES

Masses will be offered, Sunday
on the 10th Anniversary of her death
December 12, 2004.

San Pedro Parish .... 6:00 a.m.
San Pedro, Antique
Assumption College Chapel .... 7:00 a.m.
San Lorenzo Village, Makati City
San Antonio de Padua Parish .... 7:15 a.m.
Lincoln St., SFDM, Quezon City
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Chapel .... 7:30 a.m.
46 P. Sanchez St., Manila
National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes .... 8:00 a.m.
Kanlaon cor. Retiro, Quezon City
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice .... 8:00 a.m.
U.P. Diliman, Quezon City
Santissimo Rosario Chapel .... 8:00 a.m.
U.S.T. España, Manila
Sanctuario de San Jose .... 8:15 a.m.
Greenhills, Mandaluyong City
St. Joseph's Cathedral .... 8:30 a.m.
San Jose, Antique
Redemptorist Church .... 9:00 a.m.
Bacolod City
Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel .... 9:00 a.m.
Greenbelt, Makati City
Queen of Peace Church .... 4:00 p.m.
Bacolod City
Sacred Heart Parish .... 5:30 p.m.
29 Sct. Ybardolaza, Quezon City
St. Paul the Apostle Parish .... 6:00 p.m.
Timog Ave. cor. Mother Ignacia, Quezon City

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Citizen Action Against Crime on Iyo ang Katarungan

"IYO ang Katarungan" brings justice closer to the people, is the aim of Iyo ang Katarungan. It acquaints viewers on the general operations of the Philippine judiciary. It hosted by Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr., Court Administrator of the Supreme Court.

Its Dec. 12 episode on IBC 13, Sunday at 10 p.m., will feature spokesperson for Citizen Action Against Crime—Teresita Ang See—has been known to be a crime fighter, the chairperson of the Movement of Restoration of Peace and Order, currently the executive chair of the People Law Enforcement Board (Manila). Ang See's job being a bridge between Filipinos and the Tsinoys (Chinese Filipinos). She is the founding president of Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, Inc. an organization of Chinese-Filipinos actively promoting the integration of Ethnic Chinese into the mainstream of the Philippine Society in a one-on-one interview with Justice Presbitero Velasco, Jr. The show "Iyo ang Katarungan" through Court Administrator Velasco has also been providing free legal opinion and advice to people. It has been successful on its 2nd year and approaching its 3rd year of public service format.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT
MILWAUKEE COUNTY
FAMILY COURT BRANCH

In re the marriage of:

JAMES M. SCHAEFER,
5618 West Lincoln Avenue
West Allis, WI 53219
Petitioner,
-and-
MILAGROS A. SCHAEFER,
Respondent.

Case No.
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION
Divorce: 40101

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

To the person named above as Respondent:

You are hereby notified that the Petitioner named above has filed a petition for divorce against you.

Within 45 days after the first date of publication, you must respond with a written demand for a copy of the petition.

The demand must be sent or delivered to this court whose address is:

Clerk of Circuit Court:
Milwaukee County Courthouse
901 North 9th Street
Milwaukee, WI

and to John P. Savage, the Petitioner's attorney, whose address is:

6290 North Port Washington Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217

You may have an attorney help or represent you.

If you do not demand a copy of the petition within 45 days, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the petition, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the petition. A judgment may be enforced as provided by and may also be enforced by garnishment or wages or seizure of property.

Dated: September 8, 2004.

Attorney for Petitioner

(Sgd.) **John P. Savage**

6290 North Port Washington Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217
Phone: (414) 964-5670
Fax: (414) 964-7217
State Bar # 1012298

(PDI - Nov. 27, Dec. 4 & 11, 2004)

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Vacuum Cleaners
Bug Zappers
Refrigerators
Window type Air Conditioners
Microwave Ovens
Other miscellaneous items

All items can be inspected and bid placed on December 13 and 14, 2004, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Location: **Warehouse, 2345 Aurora Blvd., (formerly Tramo St.) Pasay City.** Bid forms are available at the site. Submission of bids and cash deposits (20% of the total bid) are done at the site during the sale. Full payment and bid deposit refunds will be on December 16 and 17, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the USAID/Cashier, 8th floor, PNB Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City.

For further information, please call Mr. Romy Arquisola or Mr. Allan Daluz at Tel. Nos. 852-9684, 514-4229, 514-4234 and 514-4236.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Be it known that there is an outstanding warrant of arrest for **MS. EVELYN PONCE Y DIEZ** of No. 1575 A. Isip St., Tejeros, Sta. Ana, Manila, whose picture appears below, that was issued by the Regional Trial Court of Manila in Criminal Cases No. 04-226217 for Qualified Theft.

Please direct any information leading to her arrest or whereabouts to:

MR. FRANCISCO BACIERTO, JR.
Equitable PCI Tower 1, corner dela Costa
and Makati Avenue, Makati City
Telephone Nos. 878-4425 or 840-7625

(PDI—Dec. 11, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ERRATUM

In the **ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING** re Supply of 300 MT Iron Coated Rice Grain Premix (FORTIFICANT) of the **National Food Authority (NFA), Quezon City**, published December 10, 2004, the 5th paragraph should be: The Terms of Reference (TOR) and Bid Documents will likewise be available starting December 10, 2004 up to December 29, 2004 instead of December 9, 2004 up to December 10, 2004.

Our sincere apology for the typographical error.

PDI Management

(PDI-December 11, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites authorized distributors/dealers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and delivery of the following items for use at the NFA Central Office as follows:

LOT	ITEMS	APPROVED BUDGET
1	3 units Digital Camera, SLR	490,500.00
2	181 pieces tokens (plaque for 5-years service awardees)	80,000.00
3	15,600 containers of 5 gallons each Purified Water	500,000.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

December 11 to 27, 2004	Issuance of List of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Documents and Submission of Letter of Intent
December 28, 2004 (10:00 AM)	Pre-bidding Conference, 10th Floor, NFA Boardroom
January 11, 2005 (9:00 - 9:45 AM)	Receipt and Opening of Bids, 10th Floor, NFA Submission of Eligibility documents and bid proposals
(10:00 AM)	Opening of eligibility documents and bid proposals

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

Eligibility requirements and bidding documents may be secured from the Office of the BAC Secretariat, 5th Floor Tengsico Building, National Food Authority, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City upon payment of P1,000.00, non-refundable fee. The Letter of Intent specifying the equipment/item to be bidded should be submitted to the BAC Secretariat not later than the close of business hours of December 28, 2004. Bids for any or all lots should conform with the Bidder's Letter of Intent. For further inquiries, please call Mr. Jose D. Chua at Tel. No. 712-6813 (direct line) or Tel. No. 712-3341 up to 49 local 8923.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY REQUIRED FORMALITY IN THE BIDS RECEIVED, PROVIDED THAT SUCH WAIVER DOES NOT REFER TO A MAJOR DEVIATION IN A BID AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & BAC Chair

(PDI – December 11 & 18, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF CEBU
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
DepEd Bldg., PGSO, Cebu Capitol, Cebu City
Telephone Nos: 253-9614; 254-1649; 416-6065

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Province of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), hereby invites suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Catering Services for the SUBSISTENCE of 1,400 jail Prisoners/Inmates
Location	New Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (CPDRC), Kalunasan, Cebu City
Brief Description	Meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
Approved Budget for the Contract	P7,602,000.00 or P30.00/person/day
Contract Duration	Six (6) months (January 1, 2005 to June 30, 2005) 181 days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of bids shall also be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Awards of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 4-13, 2004
2. Pre-bid conference	December 14, 2004 (Tuesday 10:00 A.M.)
3. Opening of bids	December 27, 2004 (Monday, 10:00 A.M.)
4. Bid Evaluation	December 27, 2004
5. Post-qualification	December 27, 2004
6. Notice of Award	December 27, 2004

Bid Documents will be available only to the prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos Only (P500.00) to the Cash Receipts Division, Office of the Provincial Treasurer.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. HABIN
BAC Chairman

(PDI—Dec. 4 & 11, 2004)

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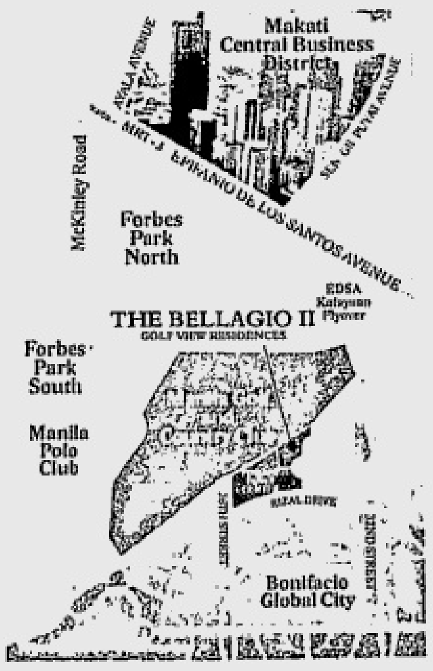
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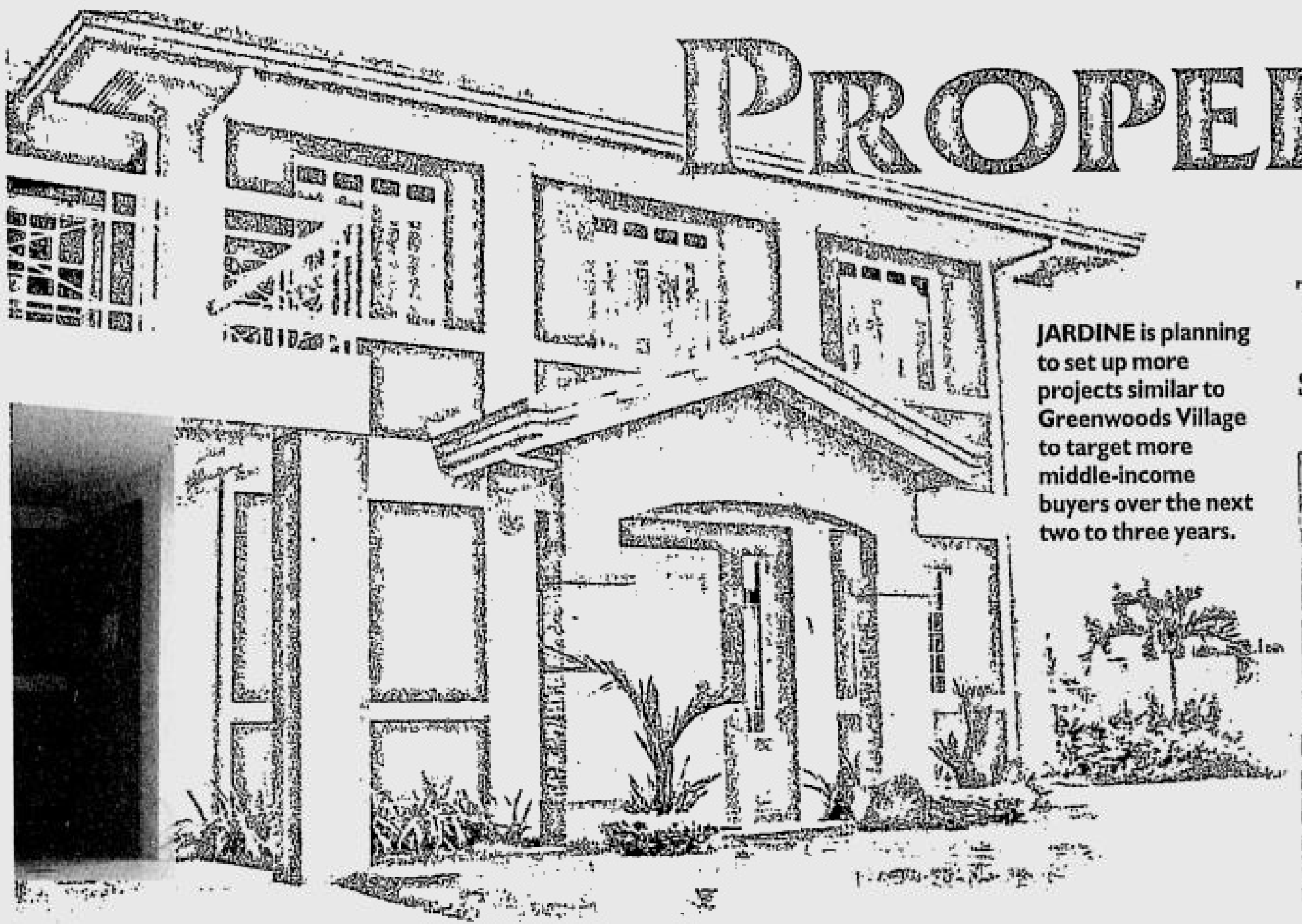
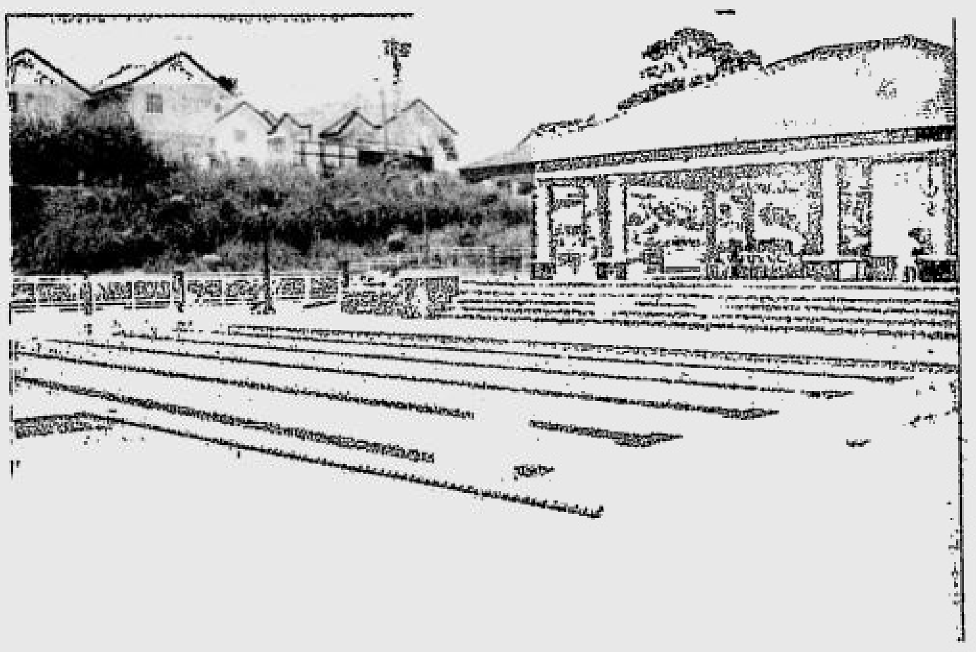
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

PROPERTY



JARDINE is planning to set up more projects similar to Greenwoods Village to target more middle-income buyers over the next two to three years.

The country's property market is expected to sustain its upward momentum



BY OFFERING high-end facilities, Jardine is able to attract overseas Filipino buyers.

Jardine Land to invest ₱1.5B in Luzon projects

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

JARDINE Land Inc., with its development subsidiary Jardine Properties Inc., is set to invest P1.5-billion worth of projects located in various parts of Luzon.

These projects will be funded through equity from investment funds and joint ventures with banks through management development contracts.

This was announced by Jardine executive vice president and chief operating officer Harry Rodriguez Jr. who expects the country's property market to sustain its upward momentum as shown by the brisk sales of several pieces of Jardine property this year.

He says the company's revenues in the first nine months of the year (ending September 2004) reached P380 million, up by 15 percent compared to the same period last year.

Rodriguez attributes the strong sales to the buyers' confidence in the property market that seemed unaffected by the country's economic issues and rising cost of petroleum products.

More buyers

"We're getting a lot of buyers from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), particularly retirees and professionals in the United States and Europe, who are least affected by the developments here," he points out.

Rodriguez reveals about 23 percent of Jardine sales were generated from referrals by people who knew Jardine projects, while seven percent were repeat buyers, an indication of customer satisfaction in the developer's projects.

Jardine has two existing major projects: the Greenwoods Village in Dasmariñas, Cavite and Lexington, a 10-hectare development project in Pasig City.

Revenues from the two property projects rose by 36 percent to reach P380 million as of September this year with a seven-fold increase in net income.

The Greenwoods Village is a 69-hectare development project that offers both house and lot and lots only products targeted for the middle-income market. House and lot prices from this property range from P999,000 to P4.3 million.

10-hectare property

The 10-hectare Lexington is a master-planned community of single-detached homes clustered around and within gardens of rich flora and shady lanes.

Its location on the Pasig-Pateros boundary, which is no more than five minutes away from the C-5/Kalayaan Interchange and the soon-to-be-built C-6, makes it conveniently close to Bonifacio Global City, Makati and Ortigas commercial business districts.

Rodriguez reveals that Lexington will soon add townhouses targeting small families, newlywed couples or for single individuals who are always on-the-go.

Says Rodriguez: "We are looking for more development projects targeted for the middle-income bracket over the next two to three years. We have to be careful in our selection of what property to develop as we have to consider factors such as location, access, visibility, utilities and infrastructure if we are to come up with truly attractive projects."

CREBA EXPO 2005

'One-stop shop' for developers, funders, buyers launched

THE CREBA Housing Expo 2005 at the World Trade Center, primarily aimed at assisting buyers in the first one-stop shop for low, medium and high-cost housing and other real estate property, was formally announced yesterday at the Pandango Hall of Manila Hotel.

The Expo committee chaired by Rosemarie C. Basa, newly-elected executive vice president of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba), said it will be the largest presentation of available housing projects and financing facilities of the Home Development Mutual fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) and banking institutions for buyers and housing developers.

A seven-month preparation and campaign will precede the staging of the Creba Expo, which is expected to be Creba's main 2005 project. The chamber is considered the country's biggest and most active industry organization.

The Expo billed at the World Trade Center on July 27-30, will coincide with the holding of the National Housing Conference by the Creba Social Housing Foundation Inc. (CSHFI), the social arm of the chamber, at the nearby PhilTrade Center on July 28-29. Basa is CSHFI chair, while Efren "Choy" Alas is president.

Exhibit

Through hundreds of booths, housing developers will exhibit their projects in various parts of the country, while banks and other financing institutions will explain how buyers may avail of their facilities.

Apart from housing projects, other players in the real estate industry will offer farm lots, vacation houses, time share property schemes and facilities at resort hotels and golf courses.

Representatives of the various sectors of the international property industry and other business sectors in Europe, United States, Canada, Asia and China will be invited to take part in the Creba Expo, according to Basa. Business matching between foreign and local outlets will be a feature of the Expo.

Housing conference

The housing conference will concentrate on local government housing projects, focusing on the Creba Social Housing Foundation's campaign for "Sandaang Bahay Bawat Munisipyo." This is a continuing thrust of CSHF to help LGUs build their own social housing projects for their communities.

The first housing conference last September at the Westin Philippine Plaza was considered a "big success" with the participation of 200 local government governors and mayors and local planning and development executives.

It was jointly sponsored by the Department of Interior and Local Government led by Secretary Angelo T. Reyes to push LGU housing projects for their constituents. Reyes fully supported the Creba thrust which, he stressed, is the first such initiative by any industry organization to push housing projects for local government units.

The Creba Expo 2005 committee members are Creba national president Purita R. Soliven and VP-chapters Avelina Acuña, sales; Florante C. Ofrecio, business; Alas, sponsorship; Creba treasurer Teresita Millan, finance; and Bong Casten, consultant.

Verdant Heights reports brisk sale of housing units

Property developer One Asia Development Corp yesterday reported brisk sales of its upper middle income housing project boosting earlier speculations that the upper middle class property sector would experience growth.

Evelyn C. Solis, One Asia's vice president voiced her optimism earlier this year that projects aimed at the middle class sector would benefit from the economic conditions wherein government economists confidently project at 4 percent growth.

Verdant Heights, the company's initial venture targeting the upper middle class residential, also manifests that there is indeed a demand for housing projects for this segment.

The project, a carefully planned in-city residential development located within the Multinational Village, offers about 204 units of house & lots and townhouses within a 3.38 hectare property.

Solis is confident that the total inventory will be sold out faster than projected.

"Instead of the three and a half year projected selling period, Verdant Heights can probably be sold out in 18 months," said Solis stressing location, security, cost competitive pricing as the key success factors.

"The project posted brisk sales during the last six months. Fifty percent of the inventory made available had been sold out," she said.

One Asia started selling the units of Verdant Heights last March 2004. The townhomes are priced at P 2.1 million to P 2.9 million while the single attached/detached units can be bought for P 3.5 to P 5 million with iBank providing financing packages to buyers.

Buyers can take advantage of the 15 percent downpayment payable over 9 or 12 months at zero interest rate and the balance can be amortized up to 15 percent. For inquiries, please contact 687-3706.

Verdant Heights offers three stylish house models for the home buyer to choose from.

Cedar model is the top of the line, and comes with three bedrooms, a two-car garage with 172 sqm. of usable floor area. The price is pegged at P 4.8 million.

The Cypress model is a 150 sqm. single-detached unit with 3-bedrooms and a two-car garage. It is priced at P 4.1 million.

At P 3.5 million, the Mulberry model has a 120 sqm. lot area with three bedrooms and a two-car garage.

The townhouses cost from P 2.1 million to P 2.9 million with usable areas of 66sqm to 82 sqm. The buyer can opt for a two-bedroom or a three-bedroom unit.

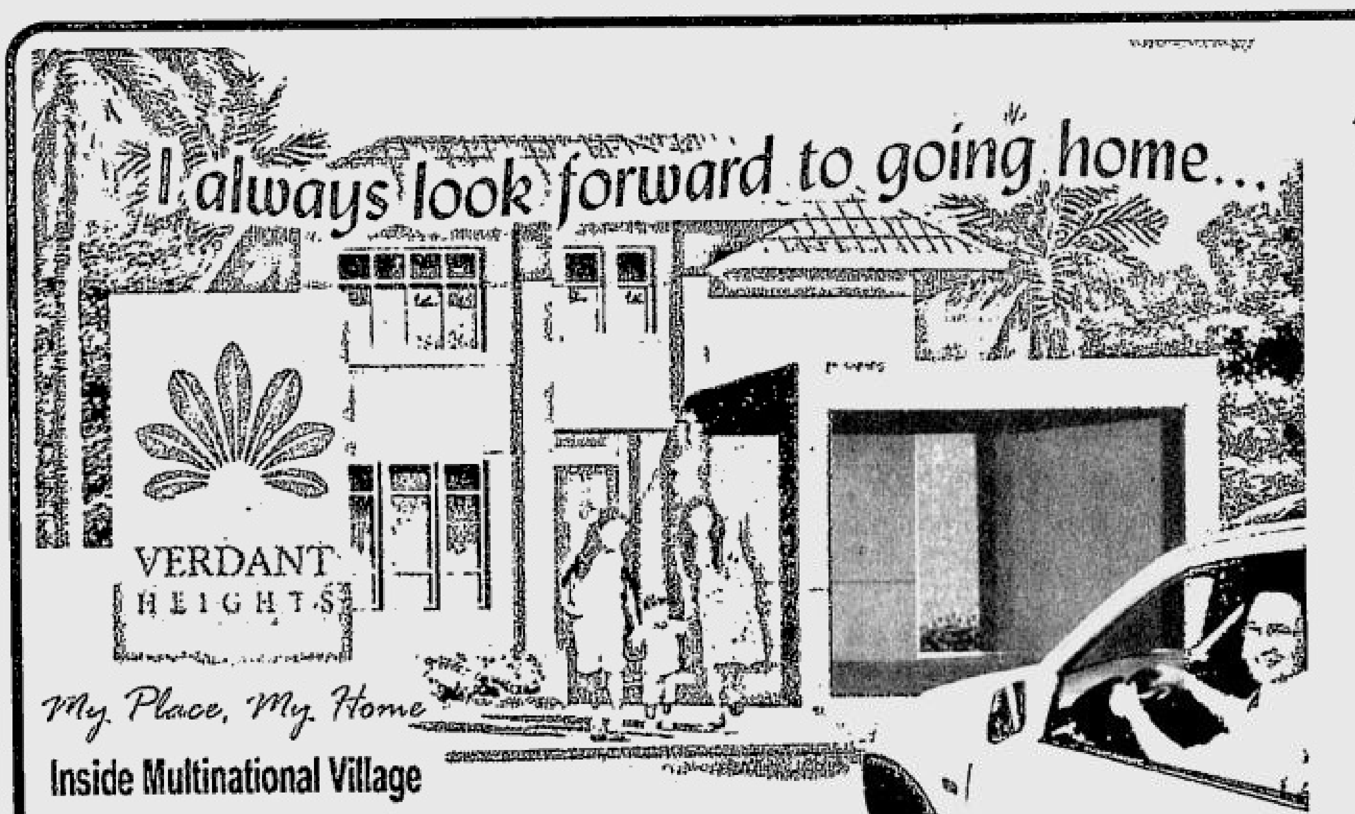
The location is another important factor which buyers look for according to Solis.

"At Verdant Heights everything is within your reach, thus giving you time to attend to the more important things in life," she said.

The commercial and business districts of Makati and Ortigas are only 30 minutes via EDSA or C-5 access road.

Verdant Heights is a P 280 million joint-venture project of One Asia Development Corp. and Atlanta Land Corp. with International Exchange Bank as financial adviser.

ADVT


I always look forward to going home...
VERDANT HEIGHTS
My Place, My Home

Inside Multinational Village

Verdant Heights is a masterplanned in-city residential development conveniently located within Multinational Village. Apart from making your life easier and more relaxed (since everything is within your reach), your expenses are turned into savings since you do not need to spend much on gasoline and toll fees. With modern architectural theme and a wide range of house types to choose from, *Verdant Heights* also provides an ideal environment to nurture yourself and your family.

So what are you waiting for? See for yourself and inquire at

687-3706 and 687-3704

GRAND OPEN HOUSE ON DECEMBER 12, 2004

Features and Benefits:

The benefit of LOCATION
- Everything is within your reach, thus giving you time to attend to more important things in life
- 30-minute travel time to Makati and Ortigas CBD (through C-5)
- 10-minute travel time to primary and secondary schools, hospitals, churches, shopping malls, wet and dry markets, domestic and international airport, Duty Free mall, sports facilities and restaurants

The benefit of SECURITY
- Play and sleep peacefully knowing that you and your loved ones are safe in your haven
- 4 levels of security, the 24/7 security at the Multinational main entrance, the 24/7 security at the Multinational phase 4 entrance, the 24/7 security at the entrance of [illegible] and the 3-meter perimeter fence that secures the entire village

The benefit of NATURE
- Enjoy a clean verdant environment to nurture your mind and spirit
- Jog along well-manicured pocket parks, landscaped areas and tree-lined streets
- Swim or spend quality time playing with the little ones at the landscaped playground area around the clubhouse

The benefit of AFFORDABILITY
- Take advantage of an unbeatable easy-on-the-pocket plan of 15% downpayment payable over 9 or 12 months at ZERO interest and the balance can be amortized up to 15 years

For green buildings, new is not necessarily better

By Amado P. de Jesus Jr.

COMMENTARY

THERE are many who cling to the belief that whatever is new is better. From clothes, to cars to cell phones, it is the latest design or model that is desirable and appealing to most people.

Sometimes this mentality affects the way people acquire homes or buildings. Some people do not like to acquire old structures. They would rather build from scratch rather than deal with existing walls, columns, water pipes and electrical systems. Little do they know that in most cases, the benefits of retrofitting or renovating far outweigh the disadvantages of constructing a new home or building. With today's rising costs of building materials, retrofits are very practical options because of the considerable savings they offer in terms of energy and cost of construction. Other savings can be found in the elimination of demolition and disposal costs. In many cases, the beautiful architectural character of the building is retained without costly replication.

While the benefits of retrofitting are quite apparent to many, what is not so apparent is how to incorporate green features in a retrofit project.

How do you incorporate green features when retrofitting?

When building or retrofitting, it is important to study the type of project and include as many green features as possible during the planning stage of the project.

There are several shades of what is referred to as "green building," but in general, a green project will incorporate as many practical and applicable green features.

Total retrofit

There are two ways of retrofitting a building. The first type is total retrofit, meaning, complete stripping of the building's basic components except for the structural portions, like columns, beams and slabs. Insulation and specially adapted windows are then installed first. Next, energy-efficient lighting and plumbing fixtures are installed. If done properly, this could mean smaller and less expensive air-conditioning systems. Well-designed retrofits can also provide environmental and health benefits. For example, if asbestos is found anywhere in the building, retrofits can work around it without disturbance.

Partial retrofit

The second type is partial retrofit, which means retrofitting only certain portions of the building.

For this type, it is best to improve the lighting and plumbing fixtures first, then replace wasteful appliances and office equipment next. The air-conditioning and the building shell can be done last.

Whole systems approach

Energy-efficient measures are more effective when a whole systems approach is applied instead of fancy, high-tech energy systems. A whole systems approach simply means a careful application of conventional technologies in a way that it has a powerful cumulative effect.

The best way to retrofit a house is to make less expensive changes first. Cut down on possible wasteful lighting and water consumption through efficient lighting and water fixtures. Then use the savings to pay for more cost-saving measures.

For buildings, avoid undertaking retrofit measures on a piecemeal basis that will reduce the energy savings achieved. For example, installing an energy management system (EMS) in an old inefficient building will not yield maximum savings. If the building remains inefficient, a bigger and more expensive EMS will be needed to get the desired results.

If on the other hand, the lighting and air-conditioning systems are improved first, then a smaller and less expensive EMS will be needed. This integrated approach will cut the building's energy consumption by at least 50 percent.

6750 OFFICE Tower, Philippines, is the first runner-up in the retrofitted building category of the Asean Energy Awards Efficiency and Conservation Best Practices Competition for Buildings 2004.

Best suited for retrofit

Buildings whose mechanical systems need replacement because of age are among the most profitable buildings to retrofit. Why?

Considering that air-conditioning consumes about 60 percent of a building's total energy consumption, retrofitting the air-conditioning will yield considerable energy savings.

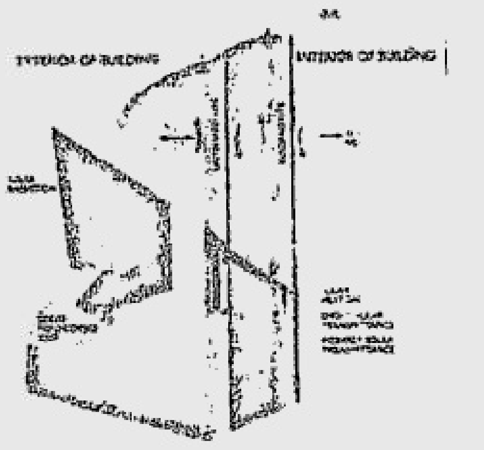
Incidentally, as I have already mentioned in previous articles, one of the four categories in the ongoing Asean Energy Awards competition is the Retrofitted Building Category. This year's three winning entries are excellent examples of retrofitted buildings.

Retrofitted buildings

- **Royal Plaza on Scotts, Singapore—winner.** This 30-year-old building, a 17-story hotel with a 5-story retail wing, won due to energy savings derived from replacing the windows from single to double-glazed windows. This window retrofit cut down heat penetration in the building, which in turn reduced the need for more energy to power the air-conditioners. It also upgraded its air-conditioning system and replaced the cooling towers, among other improvements.
- **6750 Office Tower, Philippines—first runner-up.** This 12-year-old high-end office and commercial building made considerable savings after its retrofit due to its condenser-cleaning system, lighting, timer installation of air-conditioning and machine rooms and improvement of elevator controls.
- **The American Club, Singapore—second runner-up.** This 15-year-old private club derived energy savings through the integration of three separate chillers into one central unit. It also drastically reduced water consumption by using efficient fixtures and effective management systems.

These buildings represent the most successful projects in the region in this year's Asean Energy Awards Competition under the Retrofitted Building Category. Through a whole systems approach in planning and design, they have made considerable energy savings in their operations.

USING doubled glazed glass allows sunlight to enter while deflecting heat. This is a most effective feature for buildings that want to be energy-efficient. Its special film reduces ultraviolet and infrared radiation. The airspace between two glass layers is filled with argon gas, creating a reflective air space to increase its insulation property against heat.



Don Emilio Abello Awards

In line with the government's policy of encouraging more buildings to be energy-efficient, the Department of Energy, through Secretary Vincent Perez, has been conducting a local competition called the Don Emilio Abello Energy Efficiency and Government Energy Management and Program Awards. The outstanding companies are recognized for their energy efficiency and their contribution to nation building.

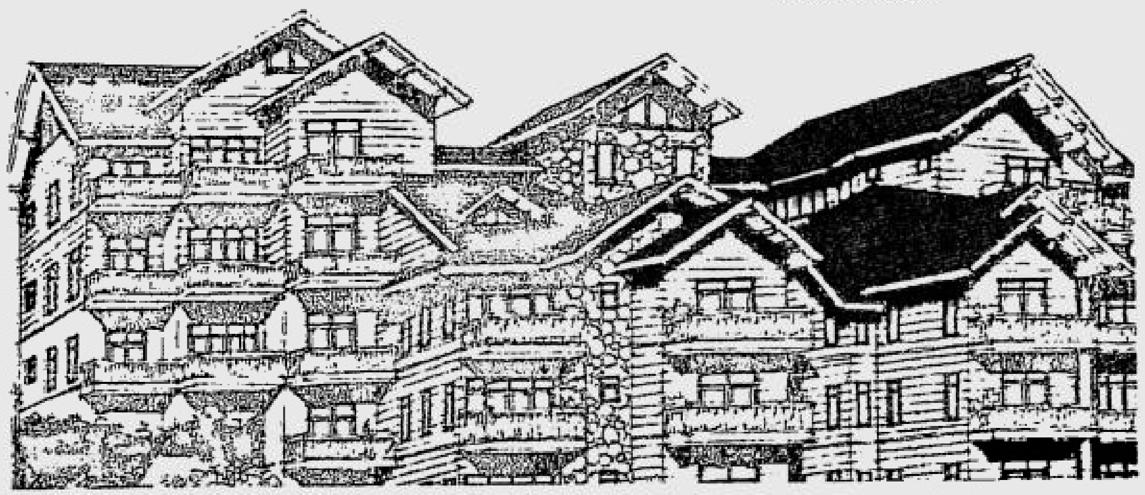
The awarding this year was held last Dec. 7 at the Petron MegaPlaza. The awards of recognition were:

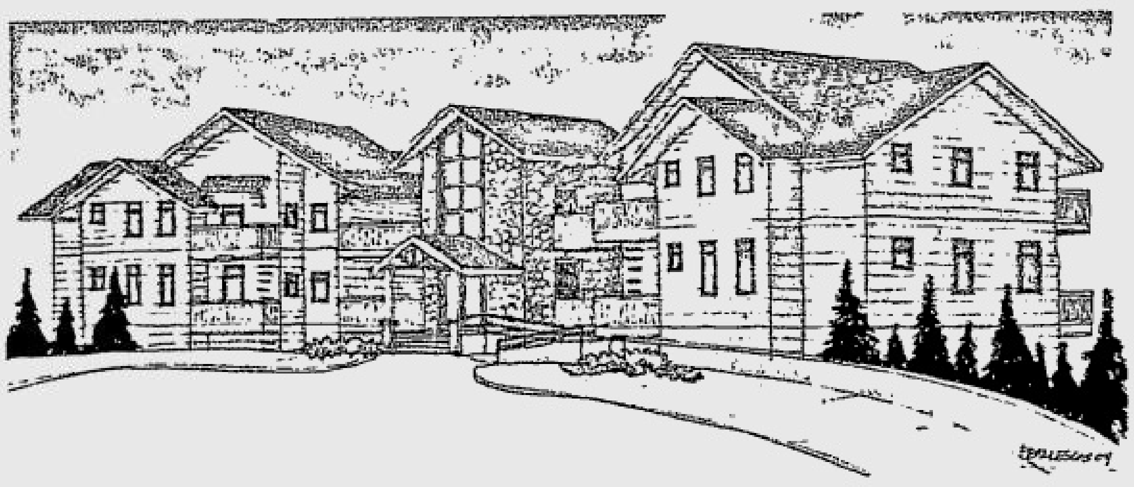
- Government Energy Management Program Award
- 2004 entries to the Asean Energy Efficiency in Buildings
- Independent power producers
- Power producers for own use

Topping the awardees was Dole Phil. Inc., receiving the prestigious Secretary's Award for having won in the competition for three years.

For more details about the Asean Energy Awards and the Don Emilio Abello Awards Program, please contact the Department of Energy.

The author is the vice chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards. For comments or inquiries, e-mail archadejesus@yahoo.com


ENVISION a weekend retreat inspired by the tranquil and charming chalets in Switzerland .


HEIGHTENING the anticipation of coming home is a rounding driveway toward an abode nestled in the multifamily development inspired by the rustic charm of the Swiss Quadrilles.

Brittany launches CrossWinds Grand Quartier tomorrow

CROSSWINDS, Brittany Corp.'s exclusive, Swiss-inspired weekend retreat with thousands upon thousands of imported pines tucked away in a secluded yet accessible corner of temperate Tagaytay, will launch tomorrow morning the Grand Quartier, a new multifamily development.

A MAJESTIC vista of the Grand Quartier that beckons residents to the perfect weekend Swiss-inspired retreat at CrossWinds.

An exclusive retreat south of Metro Manila, the CrossWinds Grand Quartier draws inspiration from the success and demand for the Swiss Quadrilles.

Architectural design

The architectural design of the Grand Quartier (French for "large section" or "great quarters") is an evolution of the Swiss Quadrille, on a larger scale that engenders a feeling of bigness without structural clutter or overcrowding. Each Grand Quartier fronts a rounding driveway, with a common lobby in its mid-section equipped with lifts, anchoring two V-shaped wings leading away from the entrance, and built on picturesque, down slope terrain.

Its design offers various advantages with its many units, particularly since it evokes a feeling of warm intimacy, akin to that of a countryside Swiss lodge. Its exterior, consistent with the community's thematic inspiration, will feature Swiss wood patterns, stone cladding, dark asphalt roof shingles and overhanging eaves. Each family unit will boast a balcony and the opportunity to breathe in pine-fragranced breeze.

THE UNIQUE architecture of Chalets in Switzerland is recreated at the Grand Quartier of CrossWinds.

30 units

The Crosswinds Grand Quartier offers over 30 units of one and two bedrooms, with floor areas ranging from 74 to 109 square meters, and priced between P3.5 and 5.5 million.

Architecture and interiors of the Grand Quartier heighten the rustic ambiance and charm of CrossWinds, appealing to families with fine tastes for themed abodes. The unequaled features and prime location of the community give you a taste of the comfort and satisfaction of the Swiss life.

Visitors who wish to join tomorrow's Grand Quartier launch can also check out Country Finds, a cheerful weekend market to browse in and buy the best local finds: flowering plants, fresh fruits and vegetables, love birds, jams and other delicacies, baskets, woodwork and wrought iron crafts.

Interested parties may call CrossWinds at 850-6986, 850-2868 or 850-3084.

Feeling right where the heart is

A HOME is every owner's favorite playground because it is not bounded by rules set according to other people's standards but one's own.

In fact, the look and feel of a home is always a confluence of ideas that mirror distinct trait, style and values. Sometimes, it could be to fulfill simple or lavish whims as reflected in the choice interiors, color scheme or furniture. The sundry of things found in a home is deemed to embody experiences that touched the lives of those who occupy it.

It certainly feels good to feel right at home. So, imagine how frustrating it would be when something bad happens to it like say, termite infestation. These creepy crawlers are actually capable of causing damage and inconvenience than what most homeowners make of them. They could easily turn a beautiful, secured home into shambles once they move in.

If one chose to be unmindful of even the slightest possibility that such voracious creatures have arrived, the emotional and financial strain could be unbearable. What's worst is making the wrong choices when it comes to pest control.

Unique termite baiting tech

Many homes and structures have endured the wrath of infestation because the termiticide they use failed to provide long-term solution. In cases like this, there is only one form of treatment to use to put an end to these destructive termites: Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System.

Sentricon, the first to ever bring the unique termite baiting technology system locally, turned out to be the highly efficient and effective treatment that could put a stop to recurring infestation. In fact, many Sentricon users in and around the country have been eternally grateful for ensuring their valued possessions, pieces of property and even businesses are protected from costly damages caused by termites.

Reliable and safe

Proven to work without disrupting family activities or work schedules, Sentricon is not just reliable but safe, thus earning the trust of its ever-growing customers who realized that the tried and true termite control treatment like Sentricon is just what they needed.

Indeed, the value of a home is intangible. It not only serves as fine shelter to building dreams and keeping precious memories, but also, makes perfect setting to creating lasting imprints in the hearts of those living in it.

So, never settle for something less (or untried) when it comes to pest control treatment where your investment and the realization of your dreams are at stake. Stick to the one that has gained credibility in the country like Sentricon.

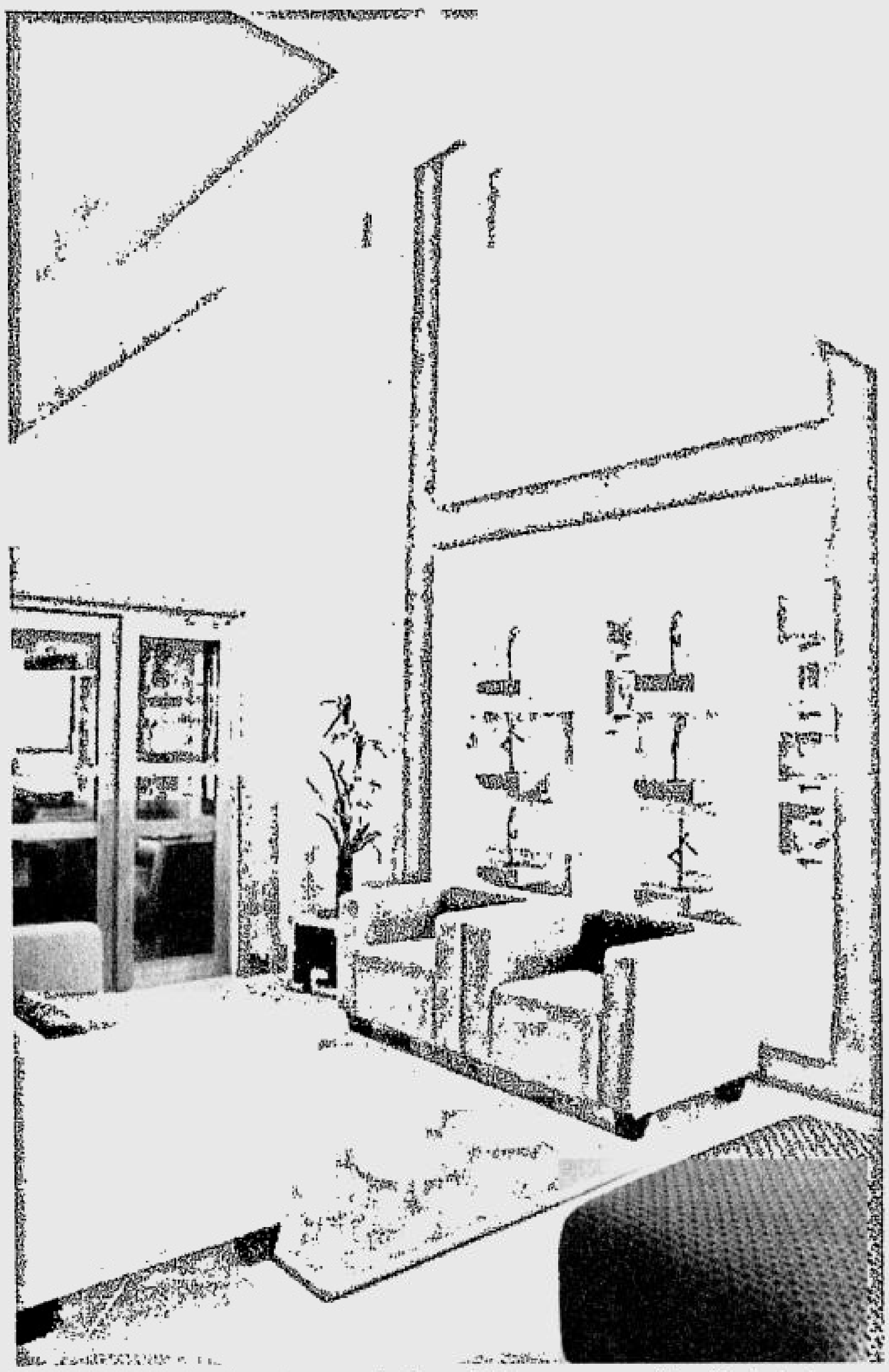
Keep your home protected from termite infestation with Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System and live life right where the heart is.

Keep termites away now! Call Sentricon at 850-0276, 920-8374, 861-3403 and 840-3874 or visit www.sentricon.com

JOYA GROUNDBREAKING
Rockwell Land Corp. marks the groundbreaking of its latest condominium masterpiece—Joya at Rockwell. Presiding over the traditional laying of the time capsule, from left, are architect Willie Coscolluela, Rockwell Land board members George Lichauco and Elpidio Ibañez, Rockwell Land president Nestor Padilla, barangay captain Nene Lichauco, Rockwell Land board member Joe Guingona and Rockwell Land chair Manolo M. Lopez. Joya at Rockwell is a 44- and 46-floor twin tower development of contemporary-designed lofts and tower apartments soon to rise on the East side of Rockwell Center.

Minimalism maximized

By Pinky B. Cruz



LIGHTNESS of being. Space becomes the focus of this sparse composition. Neutral color scheme and simple lines helped boost the expansiveness.

> *"Minimal means to me only the greatest economy in attaining the greatest ends."— Carl Andre*

STYLISTIC austerity in the arts. This may be the minimal way to define minimalism.

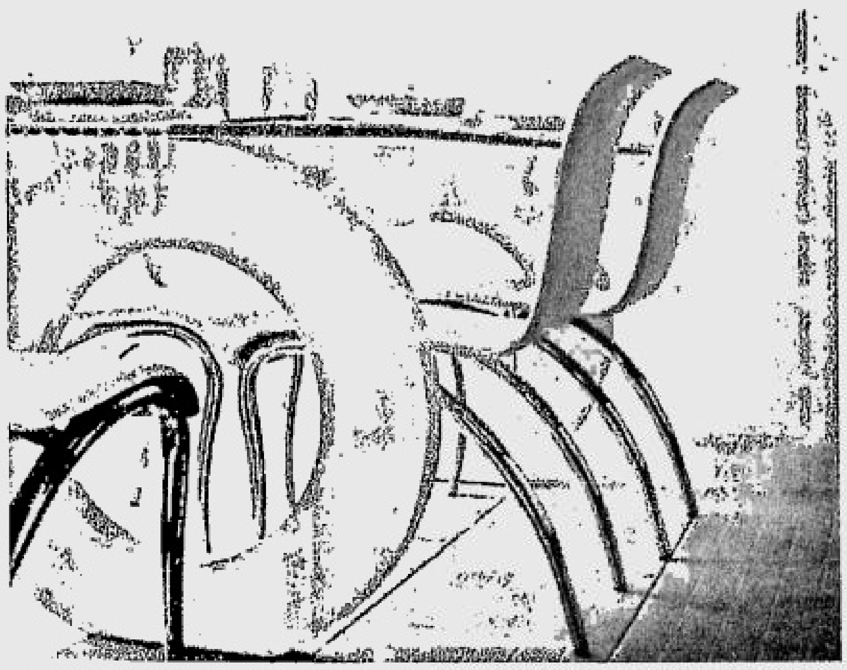
Recently, I chanced upon several model units in the Fort area that conspicuously carry this style. And I like it! Few key furniture pieces, raw natural elements, streamlined comfort. Gone are the days when, to keep up with the Joneses, you have to buy and clutter your house with what is en vogue. Well, of course, envy is still there, but a marked discriminating taste has pervaded the sensibilities of a city dweller!

Excess as mess

Unknown to many, minimalism has been here with us way before. The philosophy of avoiding excessive techniques to produce a piece of art can be traced in the works of sculptor Carl Andre who once said "Art excludes the unnecessary." Today, 25 years later, those words still ring true, capturing the true essence of minimalism. It has been popularized in design by the chic New York, having given rise to what we call loft living.

I must admit I am a strong advocate of this train of thought. I marvel at such discipline to put all necessities of living in highly ordered inconspicuous storage, putting premium to geometry of lines as an expression. And such restraint to just know when to stop. In the movie "Pollock," when the expressionist artist is asked how he knows when he is finished with a painting, he answered with a question, "When do you know when you're done making love?"

Minimalism might be for some the style with a budgetary crisis, and maybe it is. But crisis as we know it becomes the mother of all ingenuity. Let me unravel the mysteries of minimalism in these superfluous times.



ECHOING the circular motion of the table, the chair composition completes the symphony of graceful forms.

A few good pieces

Think of an essay that has been edited to contain the least words that say the most. Conversely, in minimalist interior, you only need a few major pieces to convey the "story" well. Invest on furnishings that are sleek and refined. You don't even have to hurt your pocket much. But the things you decide on must either be witty or lyrical. In short, memorable.

COMMENTARY

Be elemental

Stick to using two or three natural elements that will play key roles in the highly defining surfaces like floors, a focal wall and cupboards. Stainless steel and the natural grains of wood are favorite picks.

You may choose concrete, stones or leather to give the straight edge. The fusion of all these elements joined in precise and unconventional scale makes the vision all the more interesting.

Modular seating

Maximizing the space becomes the end of minimal settings.

That is why, instead of the usual off-the-floor sofa that we buy, there's the lure of compact module seating that accommodates more in a subtle form, barely disrupting the flow of wholeness of space.

Loud is out

Avoid boring, too masculine look by allowing for comfy tweed or mohair cushions to soften the angularity of the minimalist lines.

The usual blunder is to mistake minimalism for cold and hard lines, forgetting that we design spaces for people to feel secure and warm.

Neutral and natural

The idea is to create a solid clean colour palette to establish calmness and balance. Nature provides a whole range of tints and hints that enlivens a minimalist interior. Just be careful not to disturb your senses by too much color nuisances.

Remember, it helps to surprise the eye with a natural everyday object distinguished as a minimalist focal point not a deliberate work of art.

(E-mail the author at pinkycruz@creativepost.com.ph)

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20 years of building homes, communities

THE HOMEOWNERS Development Corp. led by president Jaime I. Hernandez celebrates its 20th anniversary this month of building homes and communities.

Founded by its chair, lawyer Jose C. Hernandez, former Rizal vice governor, it has embarked on subdivision development in Rizal towns and neighboring Metro Manila cities like Quezon City, Pasig and Caloocan.

NORTHAMPTON model

Track record

HDC has a track-record of building communities of comfortable, affordable, well-designed and structurally sound houses with steel-reinforced concrete and complete with amenities. The latest HDC community, Birmingham Meadows, is fast rising in Rodriguez (formerly Montalban), Rizal. It follows the same subdivision concept mix pursued in earlier projects: two-story house-lot units, townhouses and home lots for middle-income families wanting to move in to serene environment, but complete with amenities and facilities at affordable prices, or to build their own homes.

5 models

Five models are available. Gloucester model has 110-square-meter floor area on 120-sq-m lot, living and dining rooms, two sets of toilet-bathroom, three bedrooms, maid's room, balcony and carport lanai. Northampton model has 74-sq-m floor, 120-sq-m lot area, three bedrooms, two toilet-bathroom sets, and carport. Southampton model has two bedrooms and two toilet-bathrooms. Coventry and Dover townhouse unit has 50-sq-m floor, 55- to 63-sq-m lot, two bedrooms and bathrooms.

All house models are fitted with room and kitchen cabinets, imported tiles for all floors and bathroom finishes, prepainted long span roofing, painted steel casement windows, using steel bar, reinforced columns and beams and flooring for structural stability and finish.

Birmingham Meadows homeowners will feel secure and at peace with its gated community, perimeter fence and 24-hour security.

Accessible

The new community is accessible to Quezon City via the new Batasan bridge connecting Batasan Complex in Quezon City to San Mateo and Rodriguez, Rizal. Another route is through the Marikina and San Mateo highways. Rodriguez town is cooler than Metro Manila all year round, even in summer.

Birmingham residents would not really be far from the University of the Philippines Diliman, Ateneo de Manila, Assumption, St. Scholastica Marikina and Montessori schools. They will be some 45 minutes drive to the Philippine Heart Center, the Lung Center, and other private and public hospitals. With these conveniences plus PLDT, Digitel and PT&T facilities, being a Meadows resident is like or better than living in Metro Manila. The developer's office may be reached at 911-2696 or www.hdc-realestate.com.

HCD has built 18 subdivisions which include Madonna Homes, Cainta, Rizal; Bridgestone Park 1 and 2, and Northwood Village, Rosario, and Metropolis Villages 1 and 2, Sta. Lucia, Pasig City; Marwood Area, Grandvalley Subdivision, Angono, Rizal; Midland Homes; Roosevelt Park Subdivision and Golden Mile Subdivision. Cainta, Rizal; Don Bosco Tech Housing, Metro Green Village, Sta. Lucia, Pasig City; Panorama Hills Subdivision, Cupang, Antipolo City; Metropolis North Subdivision, Deparo Road, Bagombong, Caloocan City; Bankers Village, Phase 9, San Mateo, Rizal; Metrogreen Village, Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Quezon City; Birmingham Place 1 and 2, Brookside Hills, Cainta, Rizal; Birmingham Homes, 1, 2 and 3, M. L. Quezon Avenue Extension, Antipolo City; Birmingham Sunrse, GSIS Road, San Mateo, Rizal.

Three kinds of wood flooring that suit your lifestyle

SOLID HARDWOOD FLOORING
Hard Maple
• Oak • Cherry
• Bamboo • Teak
Available in 3/4" thick x 3 1/4" width
or 3/4" thick x 5" width
at client specified length

ENGINEERED HARDWOOD FLOORING
• Drastic weather change
• Prevents deformation
• For stability of wood dimension
• Loves elegance and durability
Available in 14.5 mm thick x 194 mm width x 1820 or 2200 mm length
and in 14.5 mm thick x 145 mm width x 1220 mm or 1820 mm length

HDF
Laminated Flooring
• When you have kids
• Running on a tight budget
• Loves elegance
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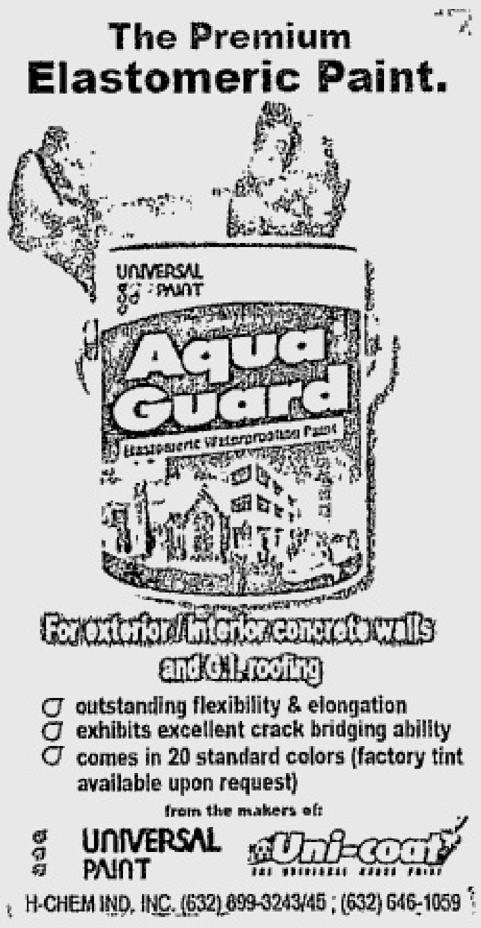

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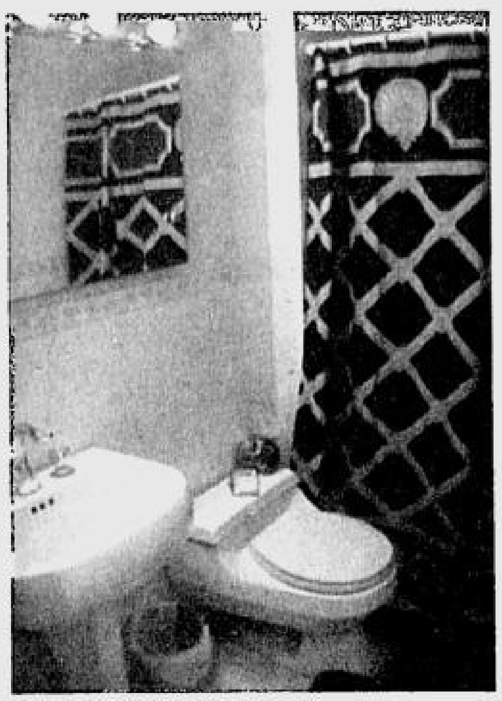
WITH THE BIRTH of Christ fast approaching, we will now look at some of the world's notable religious landmarks. The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace (Notre Dame de la Paix) is listed in the Guinness World Records as the world's largest church. Located in Yamoussoukro, Côte d' Ivoire (Ivory Coast), it has an area of 30,000 square meters and a height of 518 feet.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace is also the largest and tallest place of worship in Africa. Modeled after the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, it cost $300 million to build and was constructed between 1985 and 1989.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace even surpassed the Basilica of St. Peter in terms of size when the former was finally completed. Pope John Paul II himself consecrated the church's cornerstone on Sept. 10, 1990.

Dianne M. Villafuerte



THE ROOM with the most yin energy, bathrooms and toilets should be kept clean and dry at all times.

Bathrooms a feng shui liability

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

"Psychiatry's chief contribution to philosophy is the discovery that the toilet is the seat of the soul."—Alexander Chase, (1924-1975) US writer

BUT seat of the soul or not, toilets—and bathrooms—are considered by practitioners a feng shui liability. According to Zaihong Shen, author of "Feng Shui, Harmonizing Your Inner and Outer Space," the bathroom contains the most yin energy. This is because the bathroom or toilet has the most number of water sources—the toilet bowl, sink and shower or bathtub. Tile and porcelain, the materials most commonly used in building bathrooms and toilets, likewise give off yin energy.

Maintaining balance

Things or objects that inspire yang energy such as candles, throw rugs and plush towels should be added to the bathroom or toilet. Not only will these give your bathrooms an esthetic feel, but more important, these will maintain balance in the bathroom and toilet.

Merlina Merton, in her book "Feng Shui for Better Living," also suggests placing live plants in the bathroom and making sure that the room is kept clean and dry to play down the yin energy. Homeowners may also place a small dish of salt under the toilet bowl, but make sure that this is flushed away and replaced every week.

Many of us do not know this but each flush of that toilet bowl makes chi go down the drain—literally. This is not to say that we should save flushing and wait until that bowl brims with all those, er, nauseous objects! (Eww!) Feng shui experts advise to always put the toilet lid down before flushing and also every time the toilet is not in use. It is also more preferable to keep the toilet and bathroom door shut.

Unlucky spots

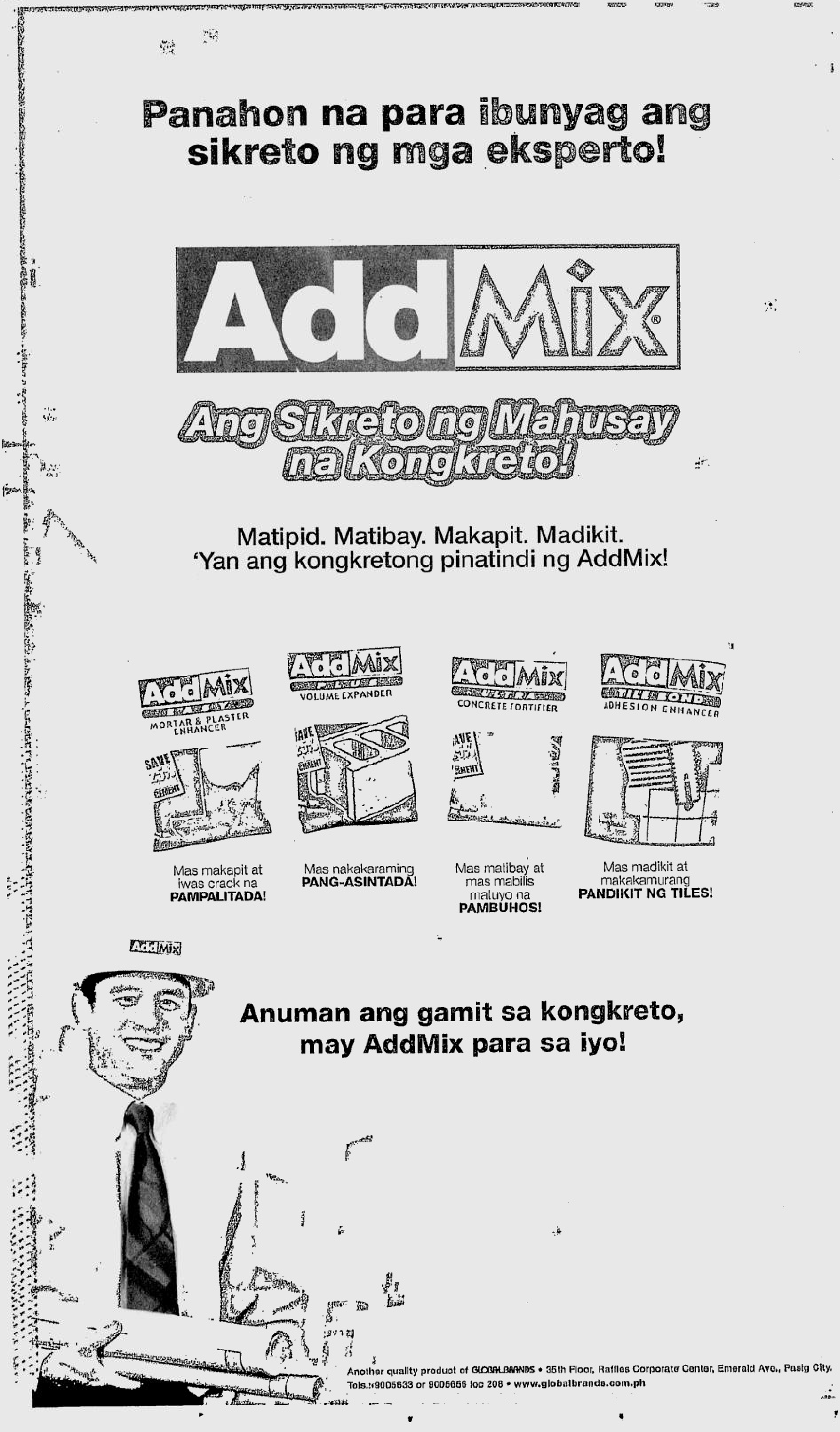
Inauspicious locations for bathrooms and toilets are near the house's front door, the kitchen area and the center of the home. Since toilets and bathrooms host the water element, it is most ideal if these are not situated in the area of the kitchen so to avoid probability of clashing with the fire element. A bathroom or toilet located on the second floor directly above the kitchen is also unfavorable because, according to Stephanie Roberts, author of "Fast Feng Shui," this will also extinguish the fire energy coming from the kitchen.

A toilet or bathroom should not be next to, opposite or above the front door because it will swallow up the entering chi before it can even circulate and flood the home's main entrance with negative energy.

Merton, however, has solutions for bathrooms which open directly to the kitchen or cooking area. One may place a live plant inside the bathroom or toilet or outside the door. Again, always keep the door to the toilet or bathroom closed. For toilets near the main door of the house, the occupants should place a screen between the front door and the toilet door, affix an automatic closer on the toilet door to keep it shut at all times.

For bathrooms or toilets built in the center of the house, homeowners may paint the walls red, decorate the corners of the bathroom with a large crystal, a stone or any object of ceramic material to balance the energy. Installing a full-length mirror on the outside of the door is also advisable for bathrooms and toilets with unfavorable locations in the house.

Unlucky spot or not, this writer thinks that what makes a favorable bathroom or toilet is the state that it is in—clean, hygienic, unstained, immaculate. A toilet may be in the least inauspicious area but if it is neglected and filthy, then the same negative energy will circulate around it and eventually, into the home. As in other rooms of the house, provide your toilets and bathrooms a pleasing and refreshing atmosphere.



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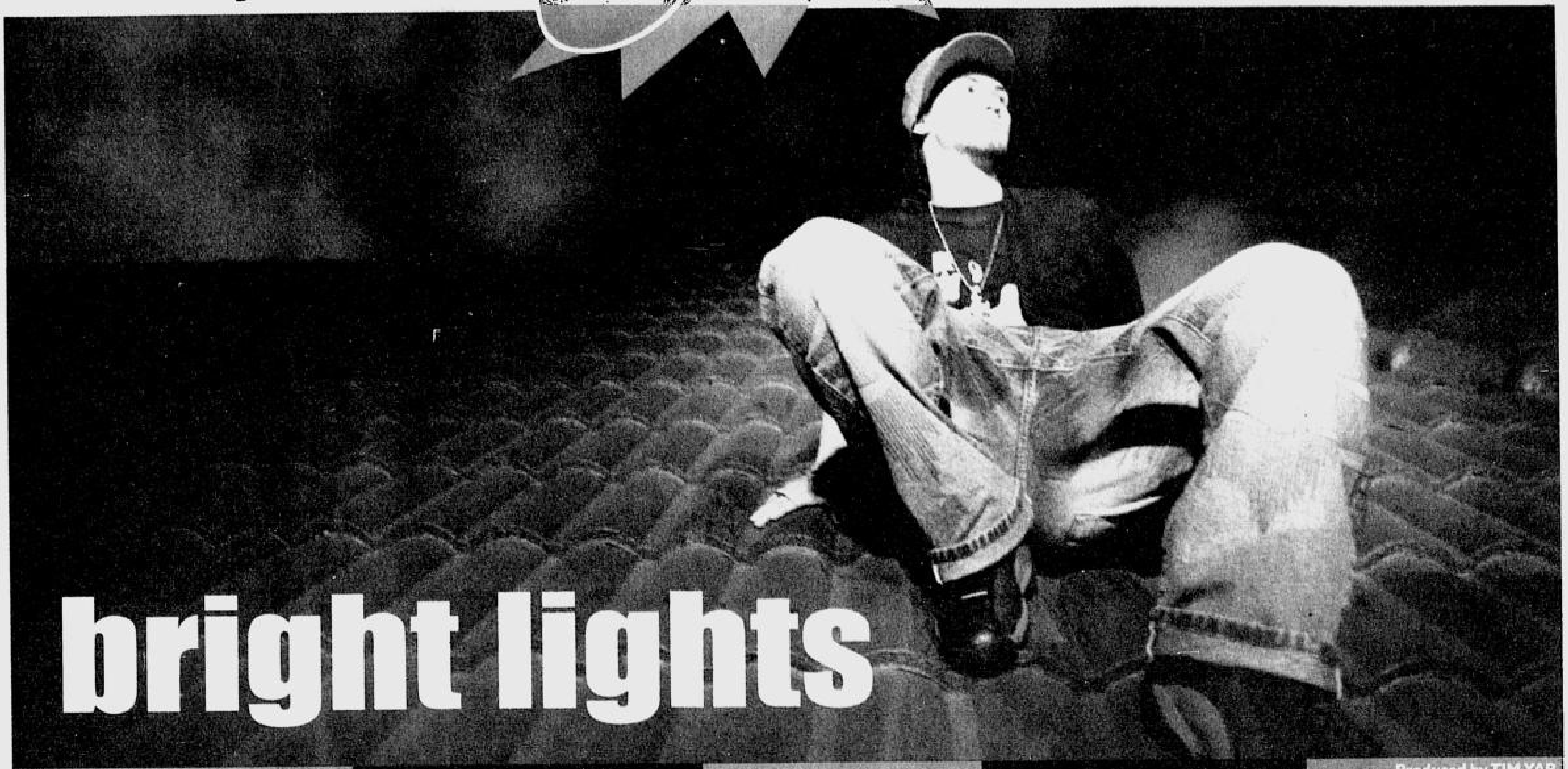


bright lights

Billy Crawford idol page C3

New Human Geoff Eigenmann page F1

Gutsy Tuason's Bahura page G2

Geek Goddess Natalie Merchant page D1

Produced by TIM YAP
Photography: STEVE TIRONA
Assistant: MARCUS MAGUIGAD
Styling: ROSARIO HERRERA
Makeup: BE ABELEDA, of Style Lab
Cover Star: BILLY CRAWFORD

Super dooper . . .

... craves Haagen Dazs' Crispy Sandwich and Beard Papa's cream puffs

... is excited to go to Glorietta for the finals of the "Design Your Kitty" T-shirt design contest by Gift Gate and Smart

... will root for Manny Pacquiao in tonight's "Yanig sa Taguig" battle

... is panicking because we haven't started with our Christmas shopping yet—and to think that we started our countdown in July

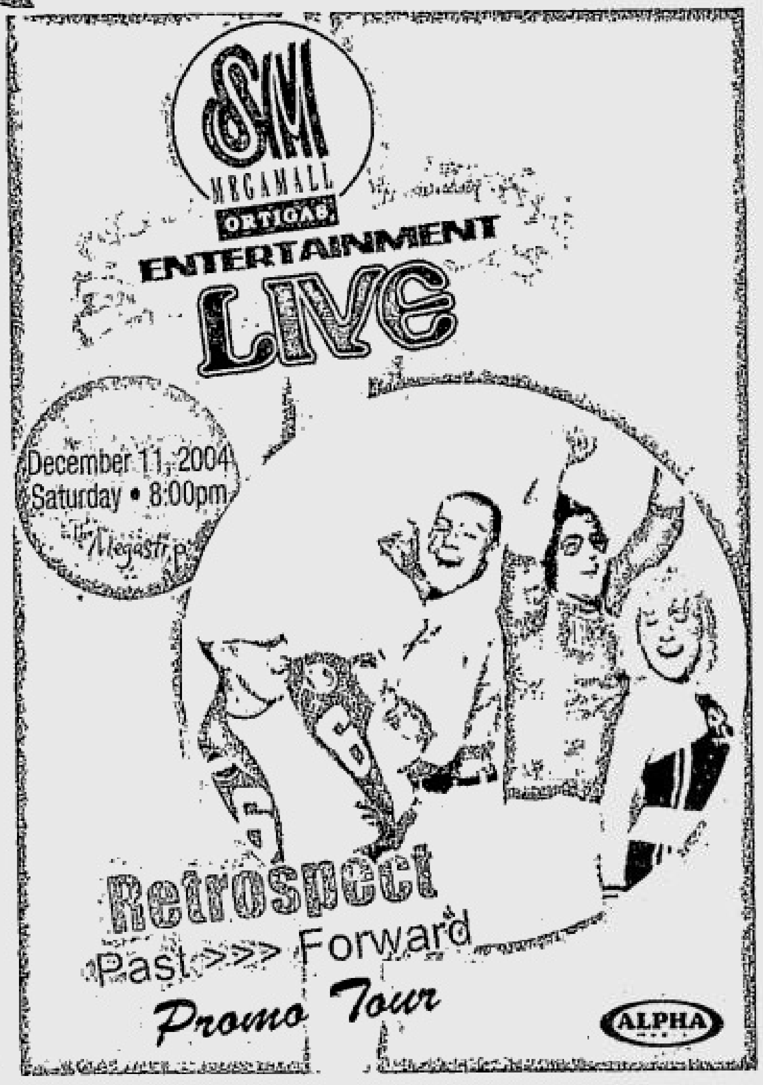
... can't wait to find out who will win the Grammys

... wants to see a crop of well-made Filipino movies come film fest time

... wishes for more generous hearts to help the typhoon victims of "Yoyong"

...misses columnists Martin Valdes, Giselle Segovia and KC Concepcion

... wants you to go later to the INQUIRER office and be counted as one of our newest Super! supers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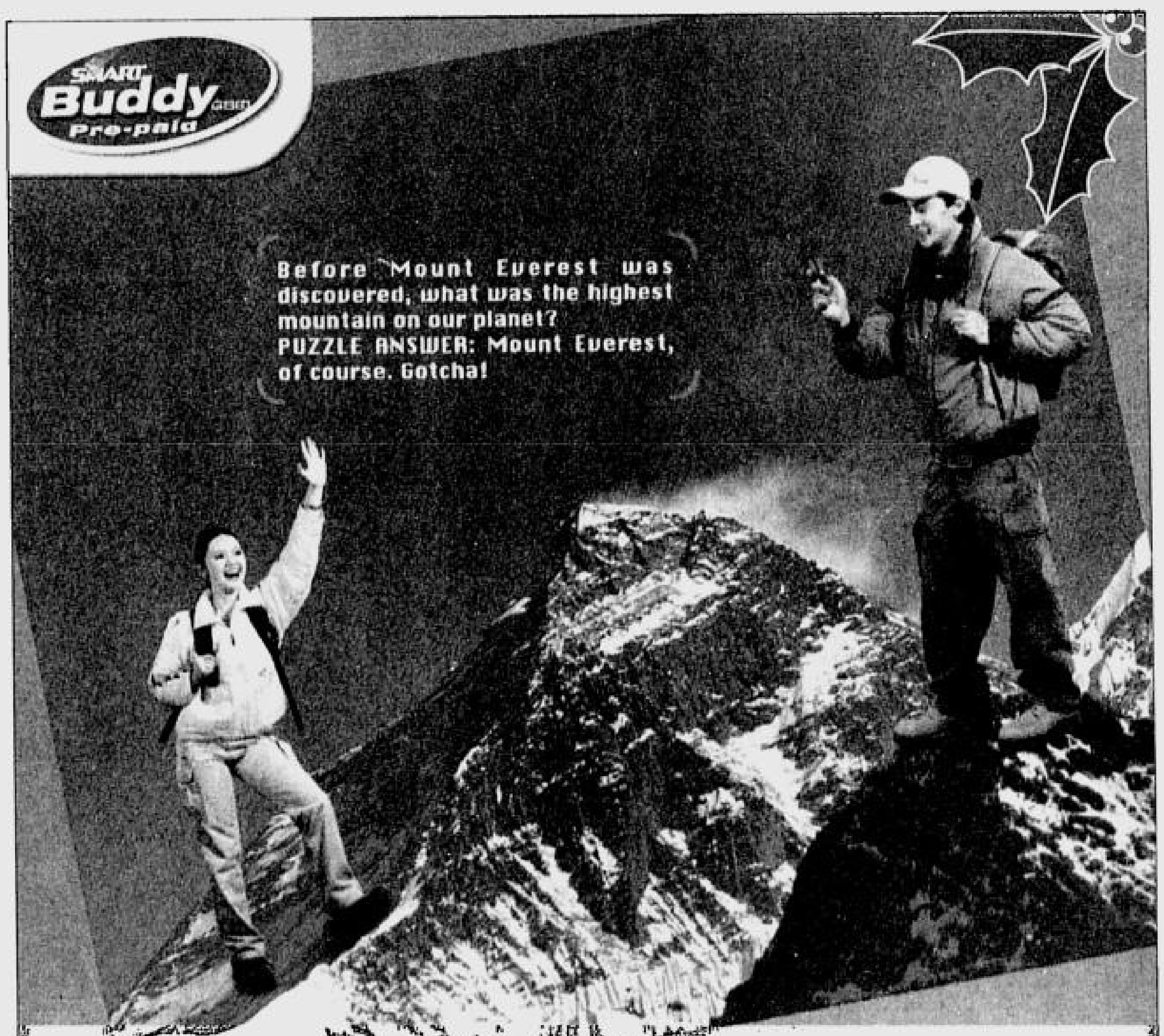
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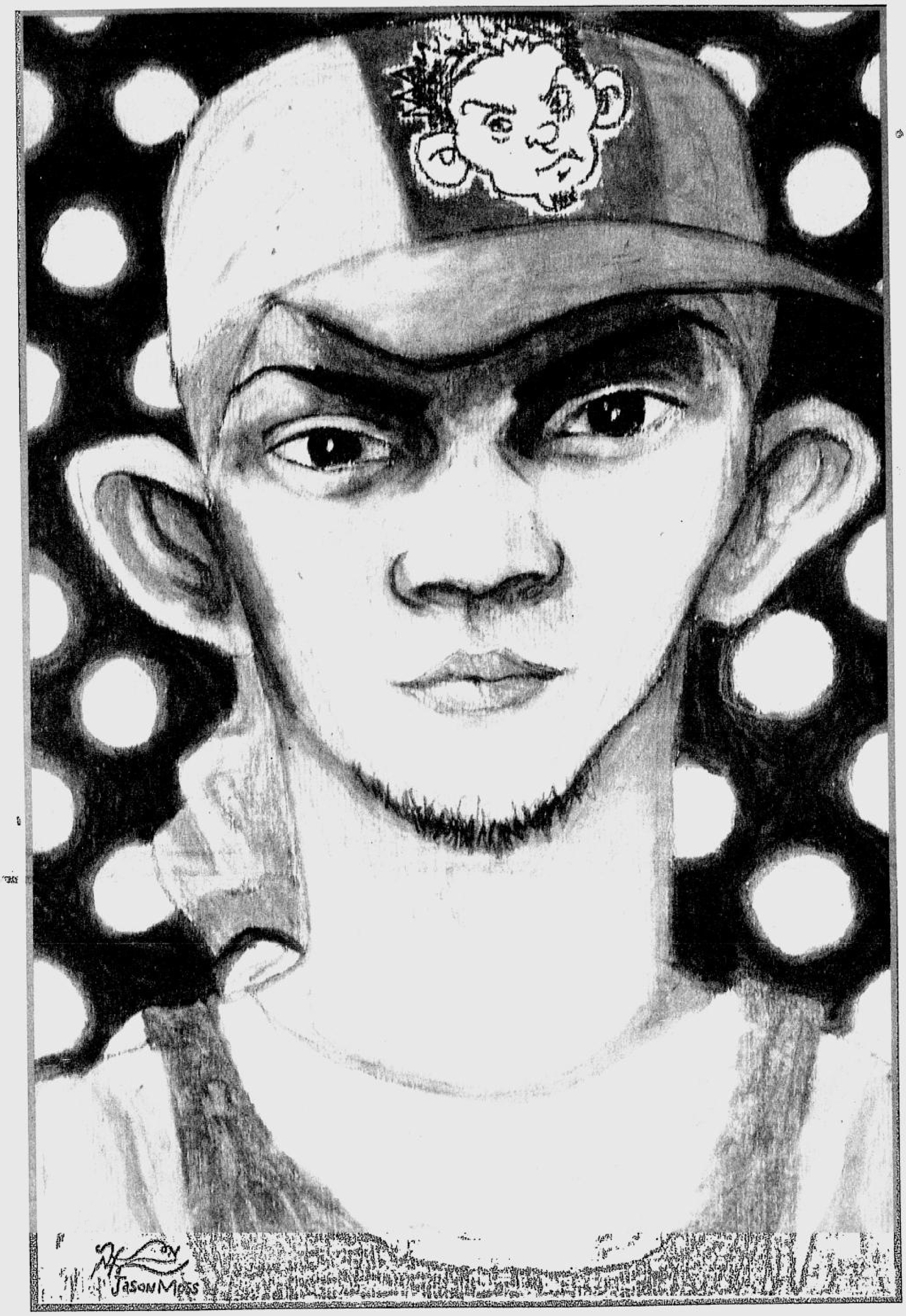


Homesick for the holidays

For restless *balikbayans* as well as Billy Crawford, there's nothing quite like coming home for the holidays

Text by Gino de la Paz and Tals Diaz
Original artwork by Jason Moss

Touching down at the airport runway isn't really a big deal for most travellers but somehow, it's an especially emotional moment for many Filipino *balikbayans*. Notice how more than a handful ignore airplane safety regulations and immediately unbuckle their seatbelts to collect their carry-on luggage and/or switch on their cell phones while the plane is still taxiing. It kind of makes you wonder why they're in such a rush, right? But all these rule-breaking habits pale in comparison to the ultimate Pinoy quirk—*clapping* just as the plane's wheels hit the tarmac.

This in-flight applause—a phenomenon by most cultural and aviation standards—would make complete sense if, say, one was coming home from Kabul or Fallujah. In which case the act of clapping meant that you were still alive and had your two hands, a real cause for celebration.

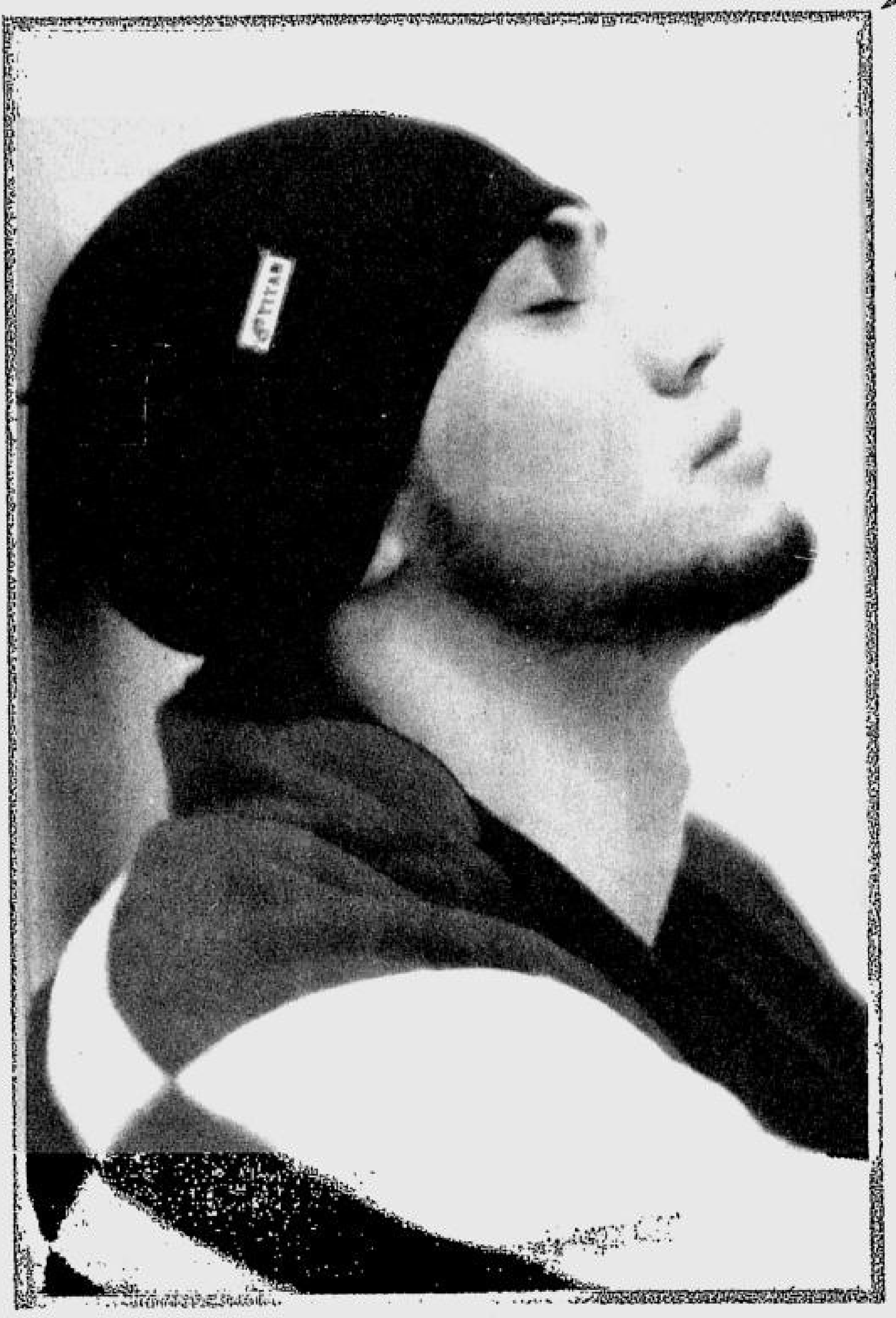
Yet how can one possibly not feel like celebrating at the prospect of seeing loved ones and old friends after such a long spell of being away? Especially during the Christmas season, a time when Pinoys take merrymaking to new extremes. Case in point: *Parols* light up the streets as early as Halloween, while Christmas trees are up well into Valentine's Day of the following year. For that alone, some have observed that Christmastime in the "P.I." is the longest in the world. (We should know. We started counting down to Christmas after the Super! Bazaar in August this year.)

Bright lights, big city

Someone who may be familiar with both the trip home and the fiesta atmosphere during the holidays is international performer Billy Crawford. This *balikbayan* pop star recently stopped by Manila and was welcomed by legions of appreciative *kababayans* who all wondered what became of the child actor formerly known as Billy Joe. Don't look now, but he is currently a certified crowd-drawer in Europe, especially in France, where his singles and albums have hit platinum status. From moonwalking a la Jacko, his moves now rival Timbo's (Justin Timberlake to you) and they're coming to a music video channel near you.

On a recent cable television interview, Billy admitted to being extremely close to his Pinay mom, who keeps his ego in check with the occasional smack on the head. Aside from his seeming normalness, it's amazing how Billy was able to take his "That's Entertainment" past to become an emerging player in the global arena. Judging by the warm reception of the public, not to mention the overwhelming amount of facetime he got in the past few days, it's safe to say that Billy Crawford is one success story that all Pinoys have an attachment to because we saw him grow up.

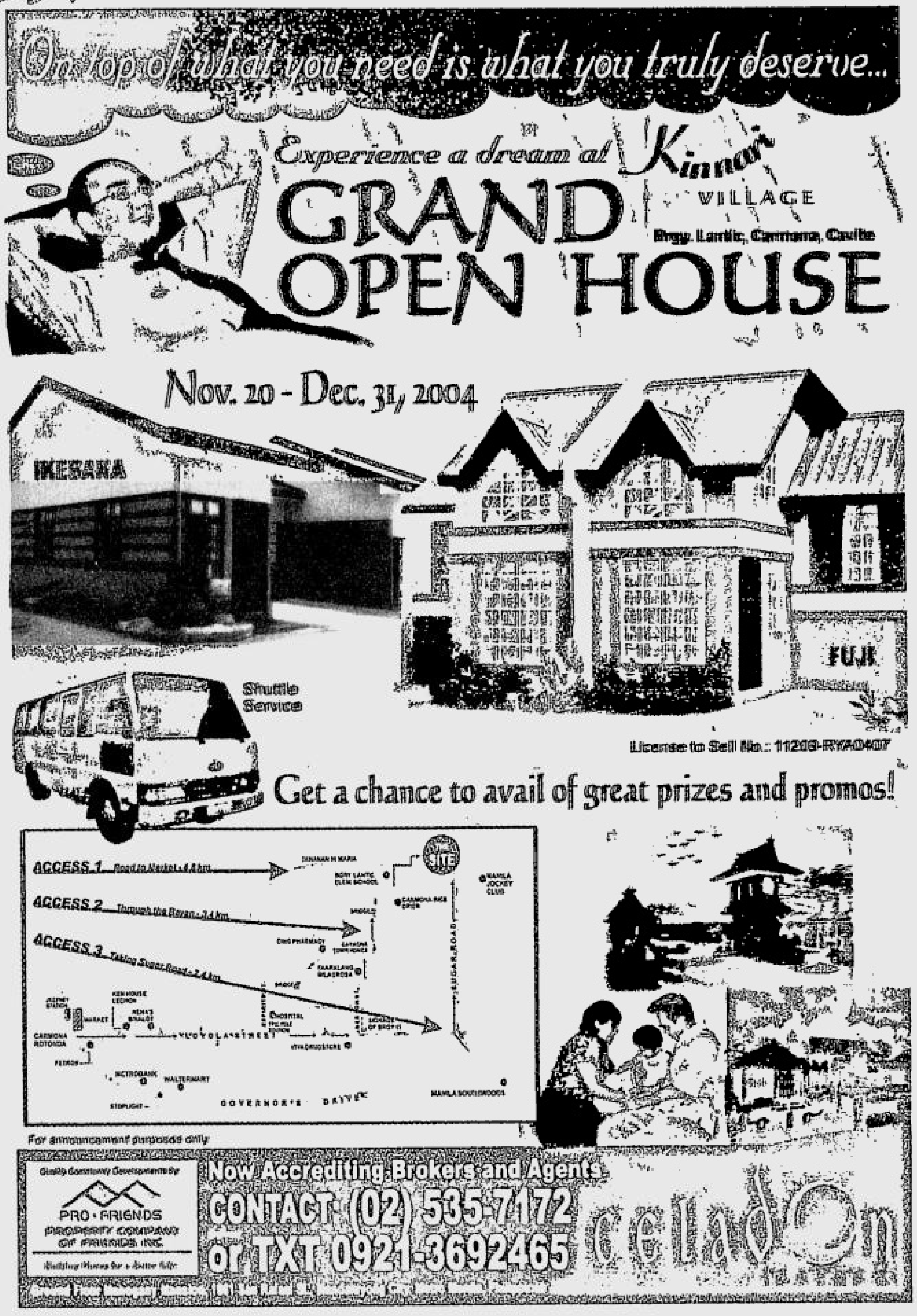
Pinoys may all leave home for different reasons. Admittedly, it's the prospect of making it in the bigger cities which drives people to take the risk. Whether you make it or not, it's always good to know that you have a home to come back to and familiar faces to cheer you on. Don't you think that's something worthy of applause?



Billy Idol

Story on page C4

Photos by Steve Tirona
JACKET BY BEA ALBERT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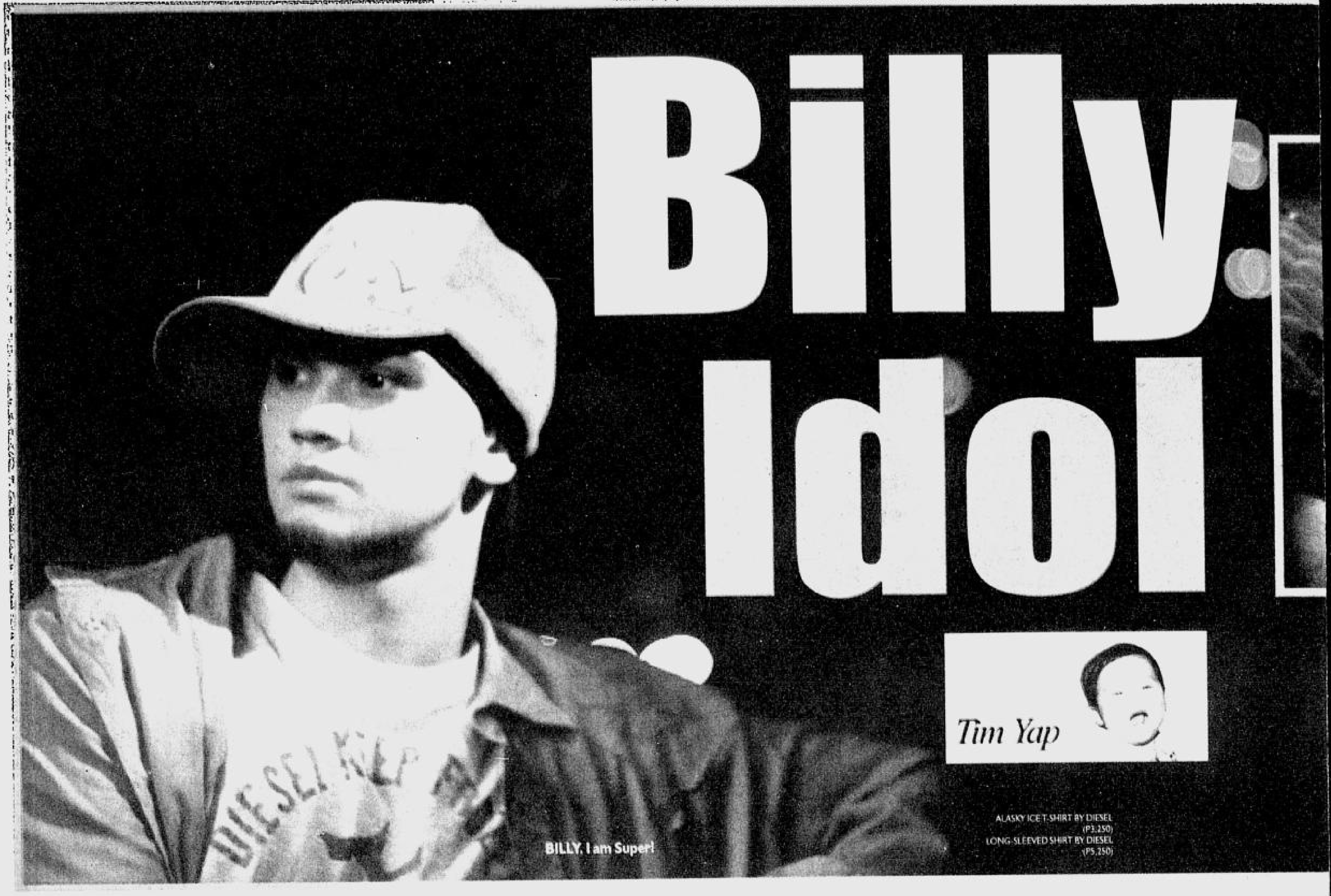

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KAMUSTA po," were the first two words that Billy Crawford uttered on the phone when Super! called him to do this exclusive shoot.

This is coming from the same guy whose songs are grooving Europe at the moment. Super! columnist KC Concepcion tells me that in Paris, she can't even get close to him since Billy is always being mobbed. Once, in Stockholm, Sweden, I was at a club that was a bit on the tame side—until the DJ played Billy's song. The club went from ho hum to happening!

At the party tendered for him by Universal Records boss Bella Tan, it was obvious that Billy was exhausted from all that he had to do (non stop tapings, mall tours and guestings). Still, he obliged and took it all in stride. He had a film crew from France, along with his whole team—backup dancers, publicist and road manager.

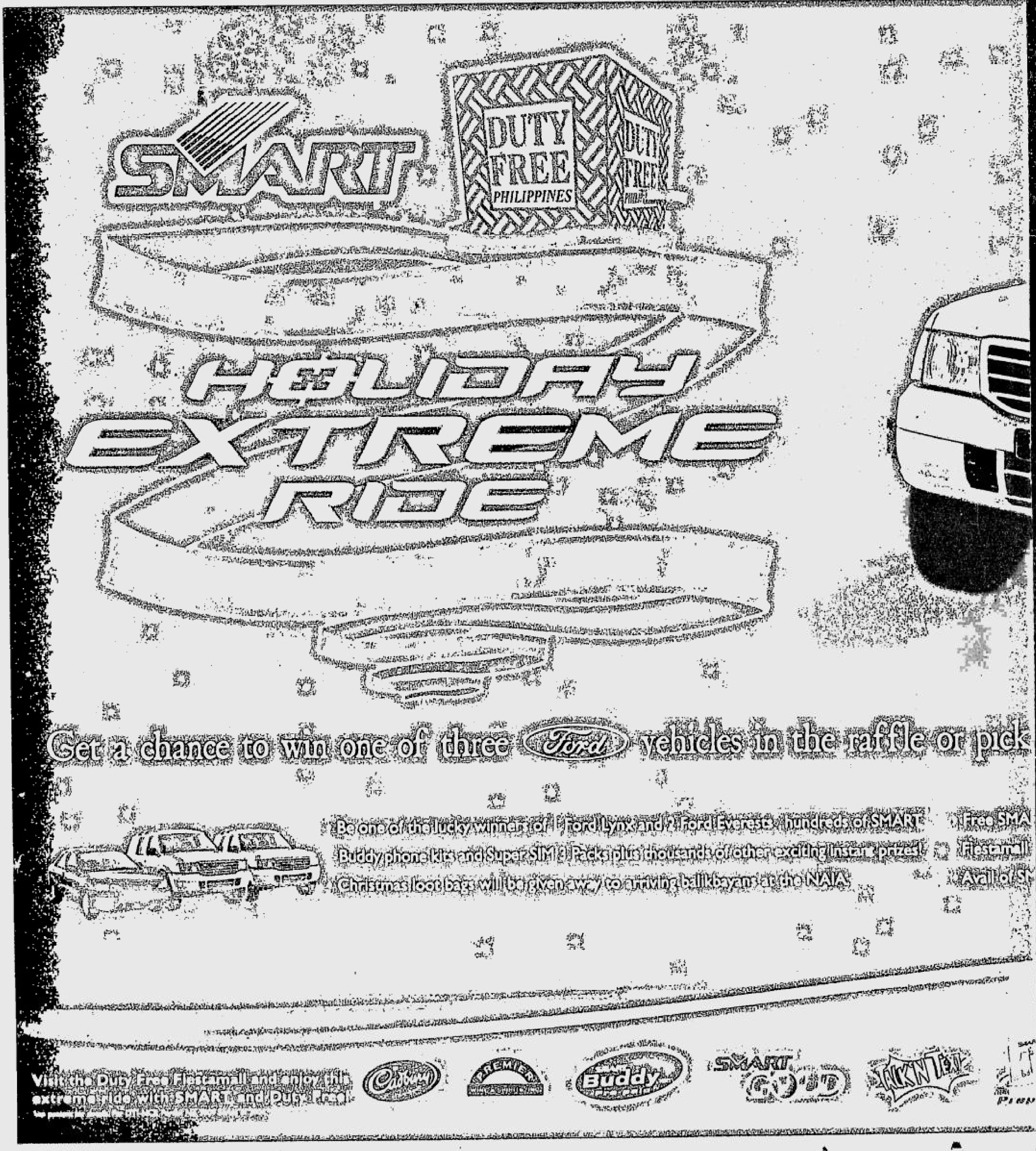
Right before he left, we were able to get some down time with him at V, where the chicks just couldn't stop themselves from going near him. Despite that, he exuded no superstar airs--just plain old Billy--the boy who did well.

Too busy was Billy that he almost didn't get to sign in our Super! guestbook. Betcha by Billy, wow! We had to track him down all the way to Paris, then to Martinique (where is that?)—just to get him to pencil in his thoughts.

The thing about fame is that to never lose your mind to it.

The thing I love most about what I do is when I'm realizing my dreams and it is such a wonderful feeling.

People might be surprised to know that I do really like my



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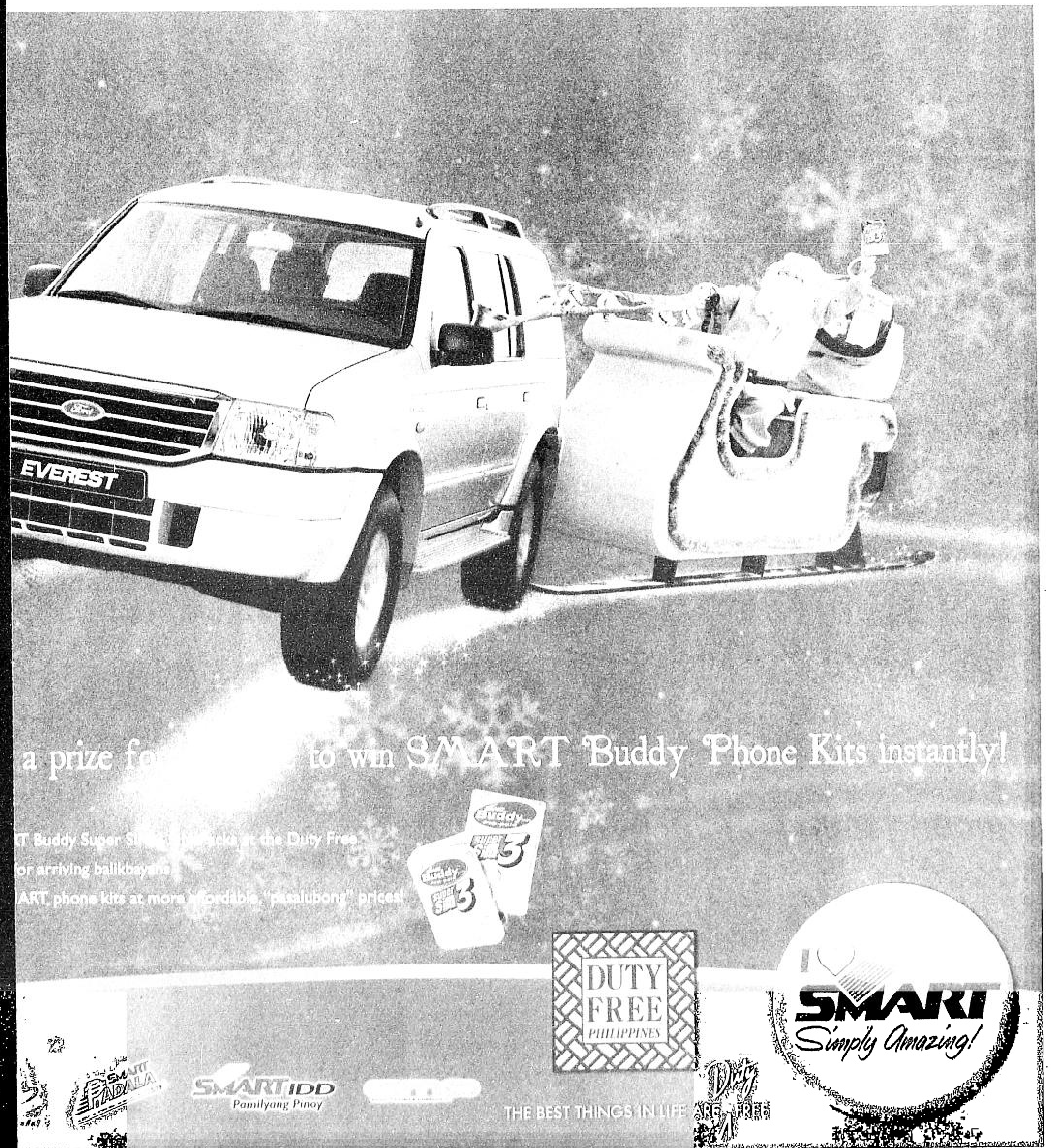
The worst thing
somebody said about me
was that I had no dreams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Pinoy ears.

The most important thing I've ever learned is that you should be patient all the time.

I wish when I started off I've been told to work that much.

The worst thing that ever happened to me was the long hair that I had three years ago.

And what taught this to me was to simply cut it.

The secret to happiness is to benevolate first, plus good friends and good family that could help.

My best ever outfit consisted of a great Paul Smith jacket with baggy trousers.

My Super! Saturday night consists of hanging out with friends while listening to good music and then maybe later, go to a Parisian dancing night club.

The soundtrack to my life would include Billy Jean by Michael Jackson.

If I was invisible for a day I would go to listen at people's comments after every gig.

The thing that makes me most angry is stupidity.

If I was the most powerful person on earth I would try to teach more people how to be open-minded.

If money were no option, I would do the same.

When I retire, I would like to dance, sing and act again.

My hero is My Mom!

The thing that makes my life worth living is MUSIC.

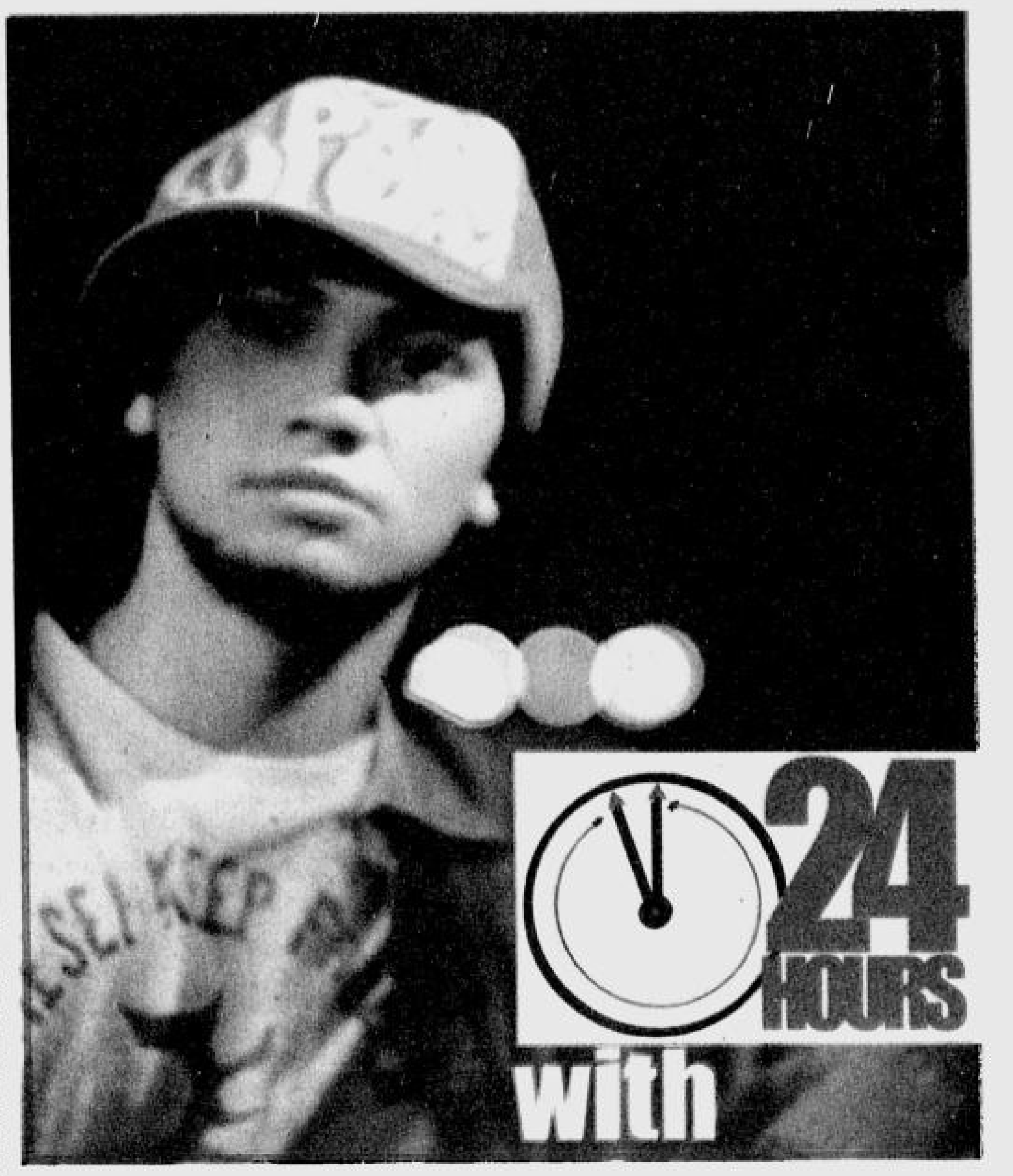
My greatest hope for the future is to keep that love for what I'm doing.

The worst thing somebody said about me was that I had no dreams.

My favorite moments are when I arrive at the stage and I suddenly feel a strange thing in my stomach.

I aspire to be the same Billy Joe I am since the beginning.

> It dawned on me how many girls would warp through continents just to be where I was for a day



Billy Crawford

Text and photos by Angela V. Ignacio

BRIGHT lights, big city, natural prankster, outstanding performer. Singer, dancer, songwriter, actor, producer. The boy with the apple cheeks and bowl-cut 'do is now a man and, ooh la la, what a man he's grown up to be.

He may have dropped the "Joe," but every now and then, one could still see the frisky little boy who once added spunk to the Tuesday group and wooed Manilyn Reynes at five years old. While I listened to him sing softly to himself in between shows, it dawned on me how many girls would warp through continents just to be where I was for a day. With his down-to-earth demeanor and zany sense of humor, who wouldn't? Add to that the fact that he neither has even a whiff of attitude nor irksome temper tantrums, and you're all set. And, oh, did I mention he speaks fluent French?

No more Joe

The face that launched a thousand French websites is back on his native soil, albeit for a very short time. Billy has shorn off the long locks and the bubblegum pop image in favor of a sexy new look, a transition similar to that of his good friend Justin T. Right now, he's bent on putting our motherland right back on the map with international awards and a brand spanking new album that's positively oozing with hot groove beats and pure, urban sensuality.

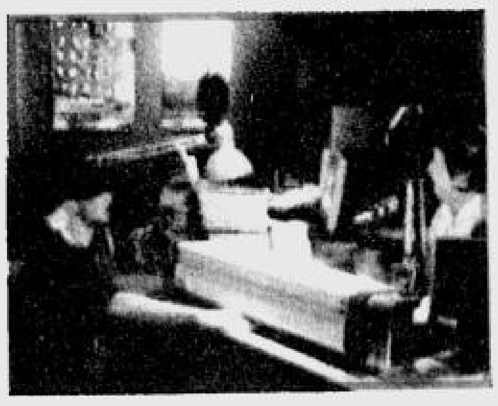
Critics raised their qualms: Is he still popular here after all these years? Do people still remember him? And the whole of Manila responded with a resounding "Hell, yeah!"—greeting him with camera phones, album sleeves and sunlit smiles that clearly read, "Welcome home, Billy Joe!" (Hard habit to break, I know.)

Next year, when he begins his UK album tour, his Pinoy fans will wait with bated breath for more news of his global triumphs. Hopefully, a longer visit to Manila will be in order as well. Until then, we'll be breeding more *danggit* for him to munch on.

He's brought home the bacon; now, let's toast to his success. While he's singing his songs, I'm singing praises. So will the rest of the free world.

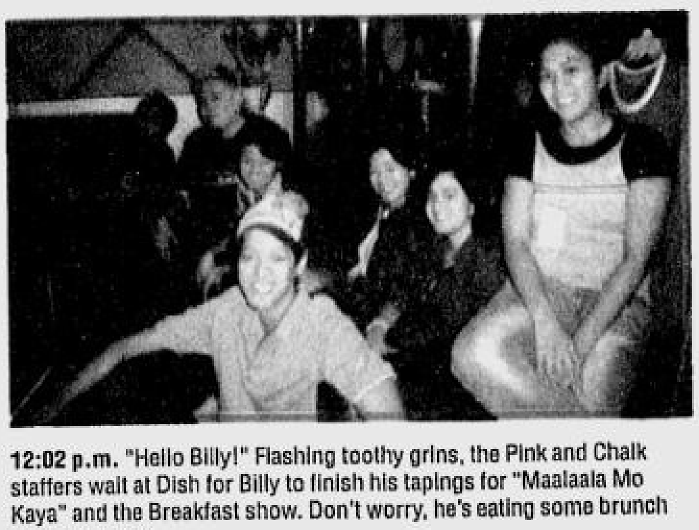
E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko @atenista.net

7:54 a.m. *Bonjour*, Manila! Billy's off to do some major radio station-hopping, the first thing on his insanely long itinerary. Little did we know it was going to be a *looooong* day ahead of us.



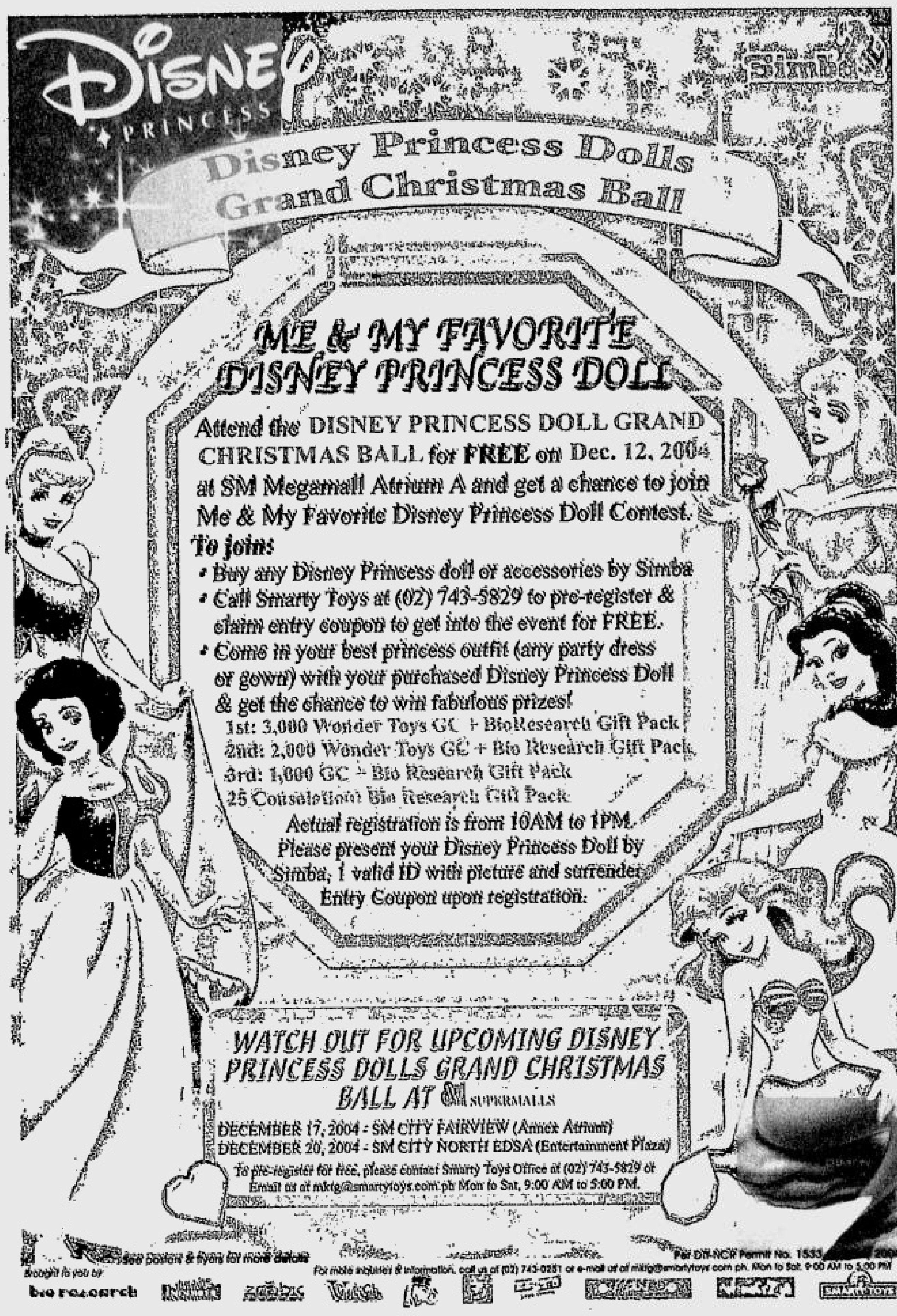
8:29 a.m. DJ: "So, what brings you back here?" Billy: "Three things: My new album, *danggit* and *bagoong*." He misses the Philippines so much, and he's dying to get back to his roots. Awww, we missed you, too.

9:52 a.m. After dropping by five radio stations in two hours, it's off to ABS-CBN for various tapings. We ask him if he's okay, and Billy grins in response. And to think he hasn't had any breakfast yet…



12:02 p.m. "Hello Billy!" Flashing toothy grins, the Pink and Chalk staffers wait at Dish for Billy to finish his tapings for "Maalaala Mo Kaya" and the Breakfast show. Don't worry, he's eating some brunch while he's at it.

12:41 p.m. Trés beau garçons Vincent (far left), Nicolas and Guillaume from French channel MCM are filming a documentary about Billy, totally oblivious to the fact that they're starting to have fans of their own. Start practicing your French, girls—I know I am. Heh heh heh.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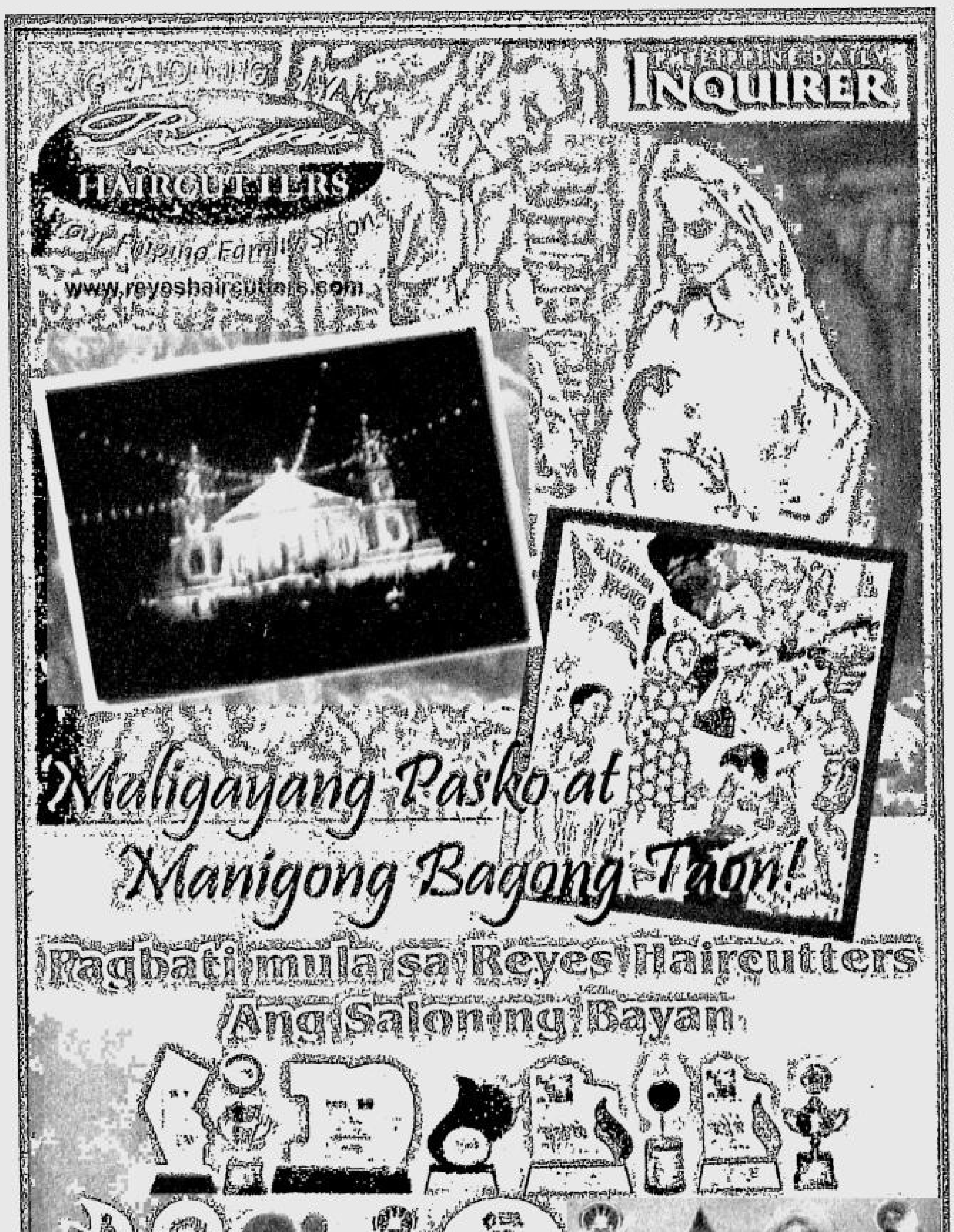
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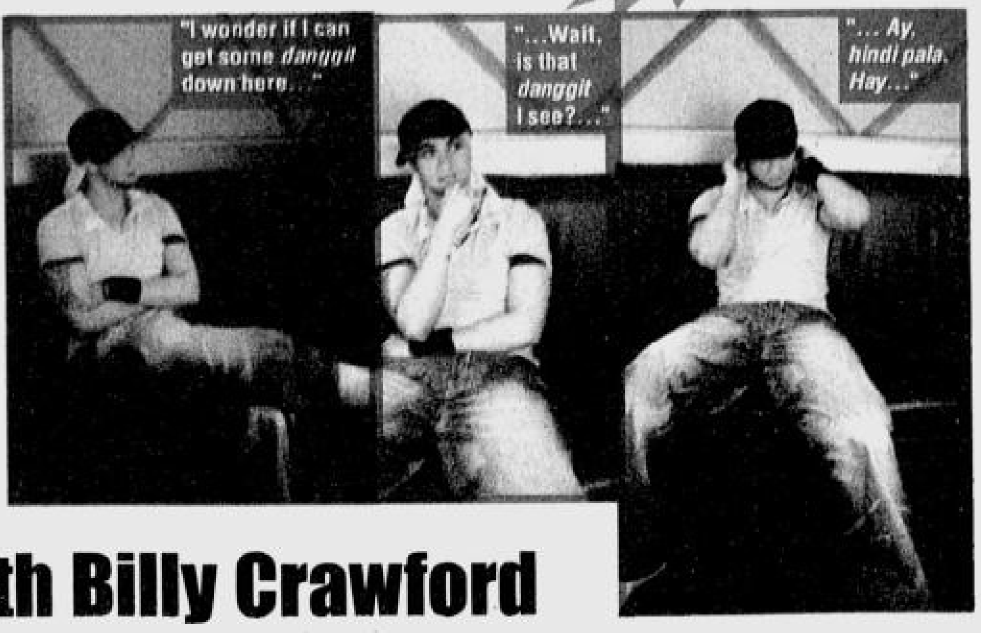
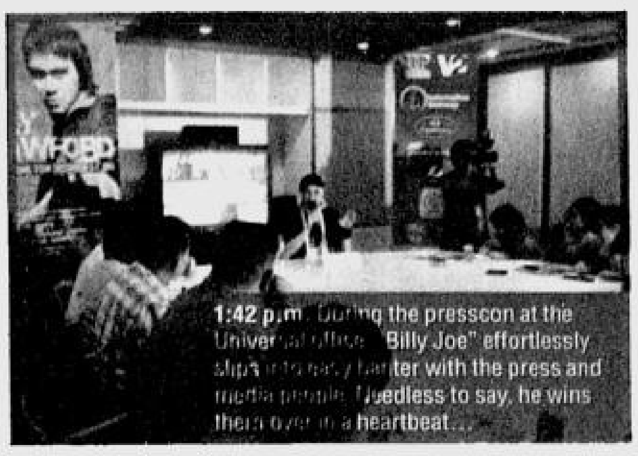
12:45 p.m. Having had his fill of sorely missed Filipino dishes, Billy's now recharged and ready to pose for Chalk. Ever the *pilyo*, he keeps making faces at us in between clicks even when he's supposed to look serious.


"I wonder if I can get some *danggit* down here..."
"...Wait, is that *danggit* I see?..."
"... *Ay, hindi pala. Hay*..."

1:07 p.m. It's Pink's turn this time, so Billy quickly changes his outfit. After a series of *siga* shots, photographer Mags asks him to do one of his dance moves. He then starts doing the "running man" with a goofy look on his face, which gets us laughing like crazy.



1:42 p.m. During the presscon at the Universal office, "Billy Joe" effortlessly slips into easy banter with the press and media people. Needless to say, he wins them over in a heartbeat...

24 Hours with Billy Crawford

From page C6

2:06 p.m. ... as shown by the crowd of eager journalists having their album jackets signed.

4:08 p.m. Easy, girls, it's not what it looks like! On the set of "Showbiz # 1," Billy chats with American Idol finalist Camile Velasco while waiting for the show to start. Both Fil-Am, both immensely successful at a young age. Talk about Pinoy pride!

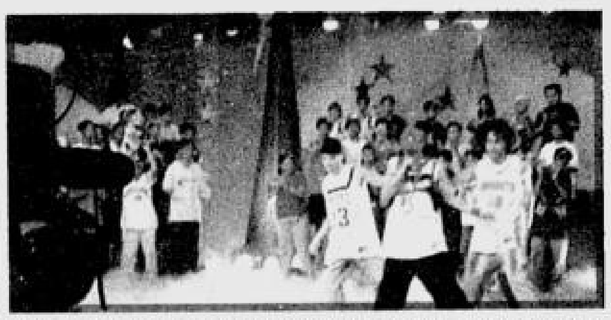
4:54 p.m. At the dwRR station, Billy converses with DJ China Heart in fluent Filipino. If there's one thing he loves most about himself, it's the fact that he's Pinoy, and a darn proud one at that.

5:01 p.m. Billy bumps into the "TV Patrol" crew on the way to his taping for "Rated K" and dishes out a hearty impromptu greeting for the primetime viewers. By now he's totally pooped, but it doesn't show at all. What a trooper.

5:08 p.m. During his interview with "Rated K," he keeps apologizing if he sounds too *mayabang*, and it's hard not to admire his humility. We then find out that Billy can have a 45-minute break, so he requests for a dressing room where he can catch some shuteye. Thank God.

7:05 p.m. Sleeping Beauty gets a wake-up call from Alex, his tour manager. He fakes a dead man's pose, which didn't sit with her too well. But we laugh anyway.

7:41 p.m. After his "Wazzup! Wazzup!" guesting, we head back to the dressing room. "Pretend that we're clowning around," this writer says. His answer: "Who's pretending?"



8:23 p.m. Exhaustion notwithstanding, he gets the "Morning Star" audience all hyped up and grooving while performing "Bright Lights" with his hunky dancers. Mr. Pure Energy himself, the indomitable Gary V., would definitely be proud.

11:23 p.m. Mercifully, the day ends with a dinner party at the house of Mrs. Bella Tan, Universal Records' head honcho. Tim squeezes in his pictorial, where Billy still manages to come off looking totally hot despite his fatigue. All we can say is, Super!

make it merry

Yes, that's it, read the fine print.

The details, it's all in the details.

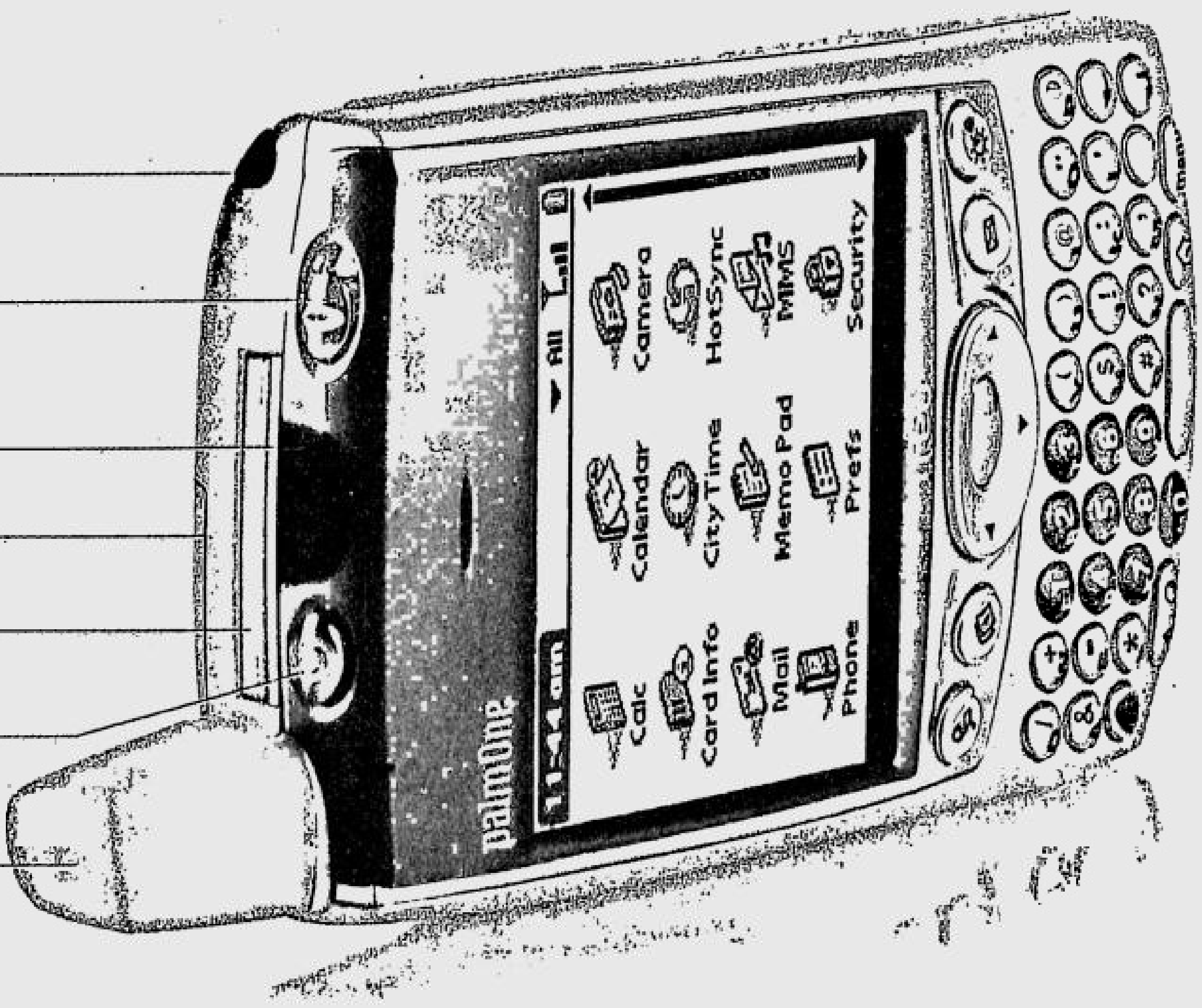
Soon, you will be mine.

I can feel it. So weak, you are so weak.

Give in now.

Such a precious little thing.

You wantsssssss it.



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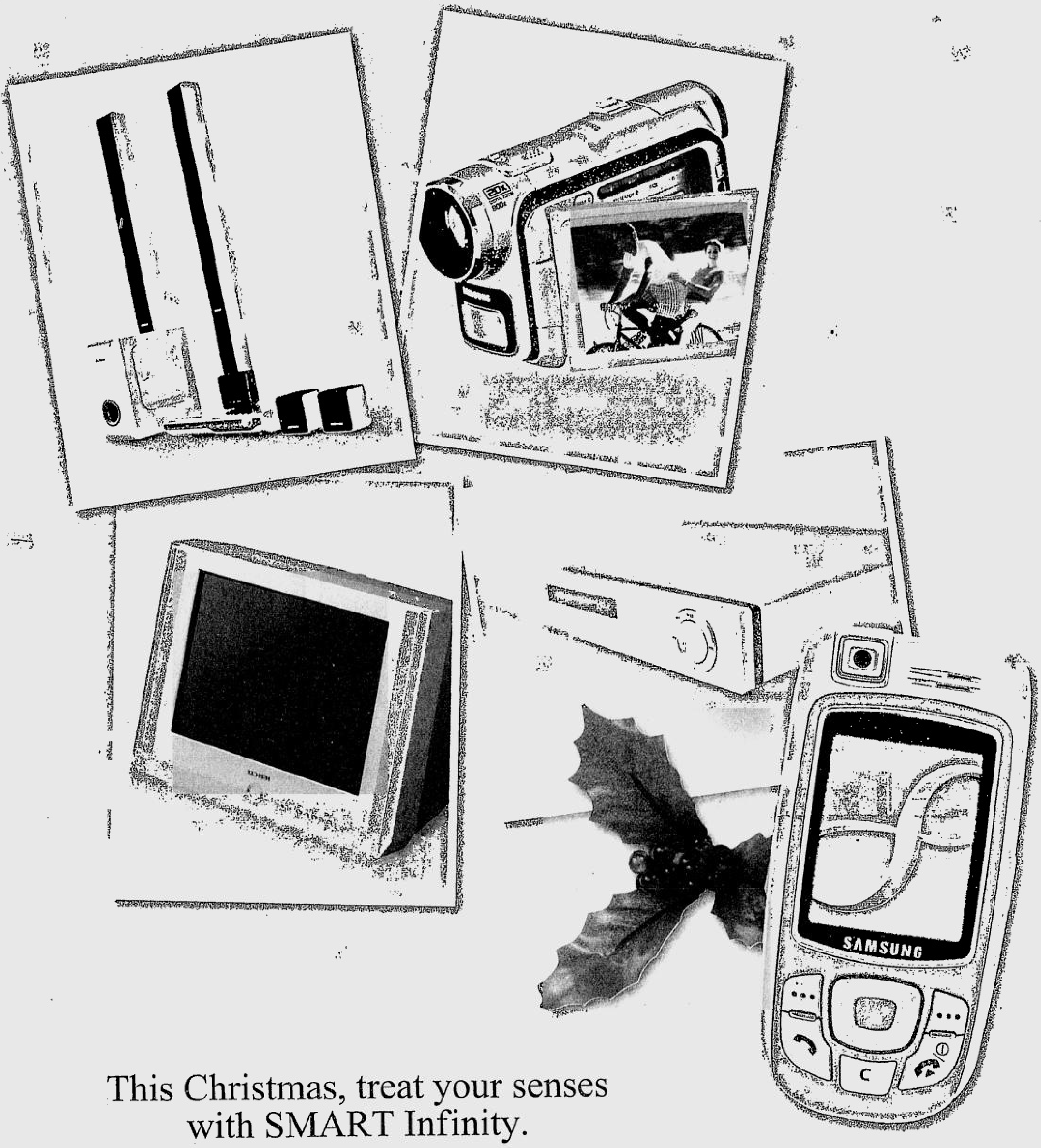

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Promo Duration: December 12, 2004 to January 31, 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3207, Series of 2004.

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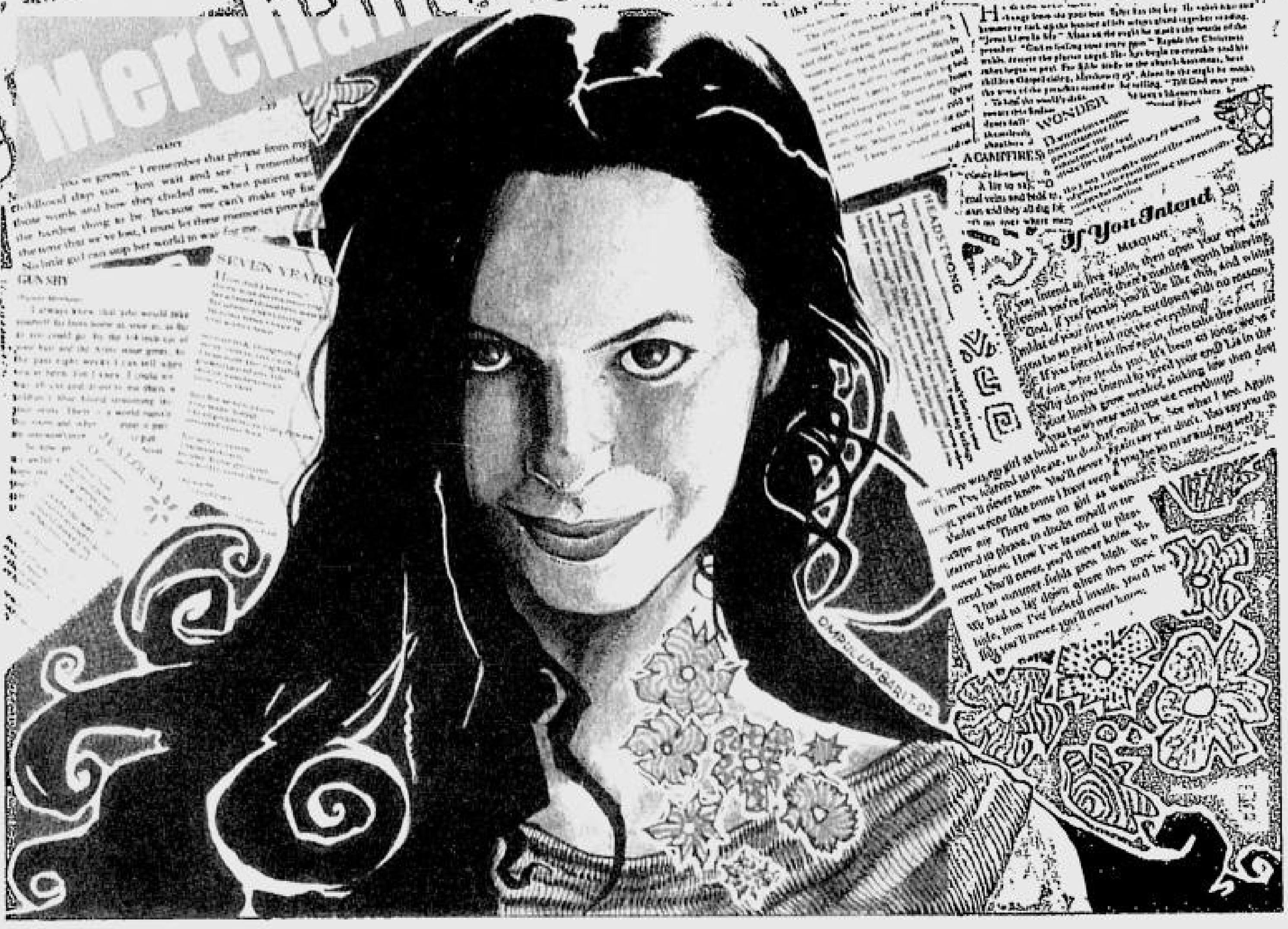
style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Natalie Merchant: Goddess of Geekdom



She continues to shape words into timeless poetry and tales that are mostly absent in present-day pop

Text and artwork by Oliver M. Pulumbarit

VERY few artists have had such a profound effect on me as Natalie Merchant has, and still does. She has penned many truthful stories within tunes that can be therapeutic and exorcising at the same time.

This former "frontwoman" of the folk-inspired alternapop band 10,000 Maniacs has used a virtuous combination of infectious rhythm and visual simulacra. Her artistry has won over a devout fan base that includes adolescent girls, aging new wave diehards, the adult-contemporary market, and celebrated performers like The Cure's Robert Smith and R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe (he and Merchant were also ex-lovers).

Many of Merchant's songs can be interpreted a zillion ways by different pairs of ears, but some of them are very specific and literal. Whichever context these songs may be put into, her cerebral input shaped 10,000 Maniacs' creative vision, their lyrical content often derived from Merchant's compassion towards victims of persecution. She employs the clever use of words and perspectives that capture other people's pain and thoughts and sings them in her distinctly warm and edgy alto.

Joining the predominantly older and male band as a teen in the early '80s seemed like a foolhardy option then. But she showed promise as an engaging performer; she is known for improvising lyrics onstage, as well as

NATALIE/ D5

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   - 30% off on Disney On Ice Ticket purchases (weekday shows) at the Ticketnet Araneta Center outlet from December 10 to January 2.
   - 20% discount (₱1,000 off) with every 14" Robosapien purchase at participating Kidz Station, Rustan and Toy Kingdom outlets in GMA, Cavite, Pampanga and Batangas from December 10 to January 15.
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Sample Mobile Coupon:

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PROMO PERIOD:
December 10, 2004 to January 15, 2005

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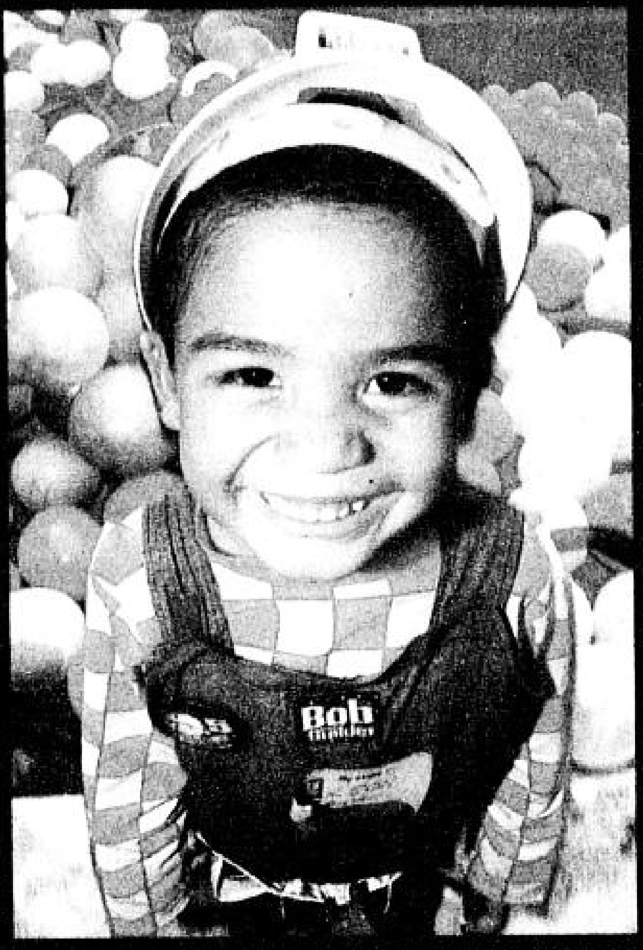
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5992, Series of 2004.

Beauty salon art



caught by

andy MACHE

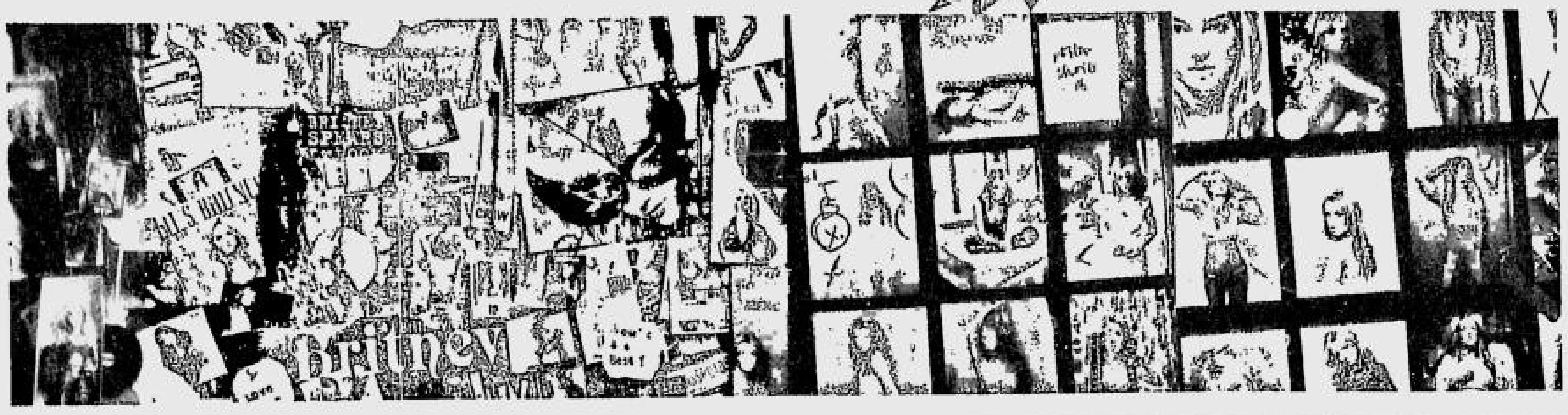
WHERE does art photography belong to?
-In a gallery, right.
Where does beautiful art photography belong to?
-In a beauty salon, of course.

European beauty product line Davines was so kind to sponsor my latest photo-art exhibition at Basement Salon, Power Plant Mall. Forty large photos turned one of the top society salons into a hip art gallery. Peligro co-owner Abba whipped up a wide section of wild and weird cocktails and snacks for us.

A wide selection representative of every part of society, from show biz to fashion to real business, Audra Lucero and Armand Sy Valencia of Davines and funky Katrina Lagman, discussed possible primary colors for Katrina's mohawk while Phoemela Barranda and Tim Yap showed interest in Puey Quiñones' latest fashion extravaganzas. Fellow photographers Tom Epperson and Eddie Boy Escudero talked about how they could teach me to take good pictures for a change. Basement owners Fitz Webb and Manfred enjoyed chatting with celebrities. Wait a minute, Don't they do that all day long?

Mmmmmhh, there is nothing like a good scalp massage the next day at Basement Salon to flush that hangover out of your system.

Excuse me now, I think my blue hair is starting to fade. Time for a touch-up.



I love Britney!

And I won't be ashamed to say it. "It's my prerogative," after all. BMG's Britney Spears Greatest Hits is totally "toxic." Too high, i still can't come down. My head is just spinning round and round to Britney... Coz I've become a slave for her music. Oops! I did it again. I just can't help it—hit me Britney, one more time! *T.Y.*

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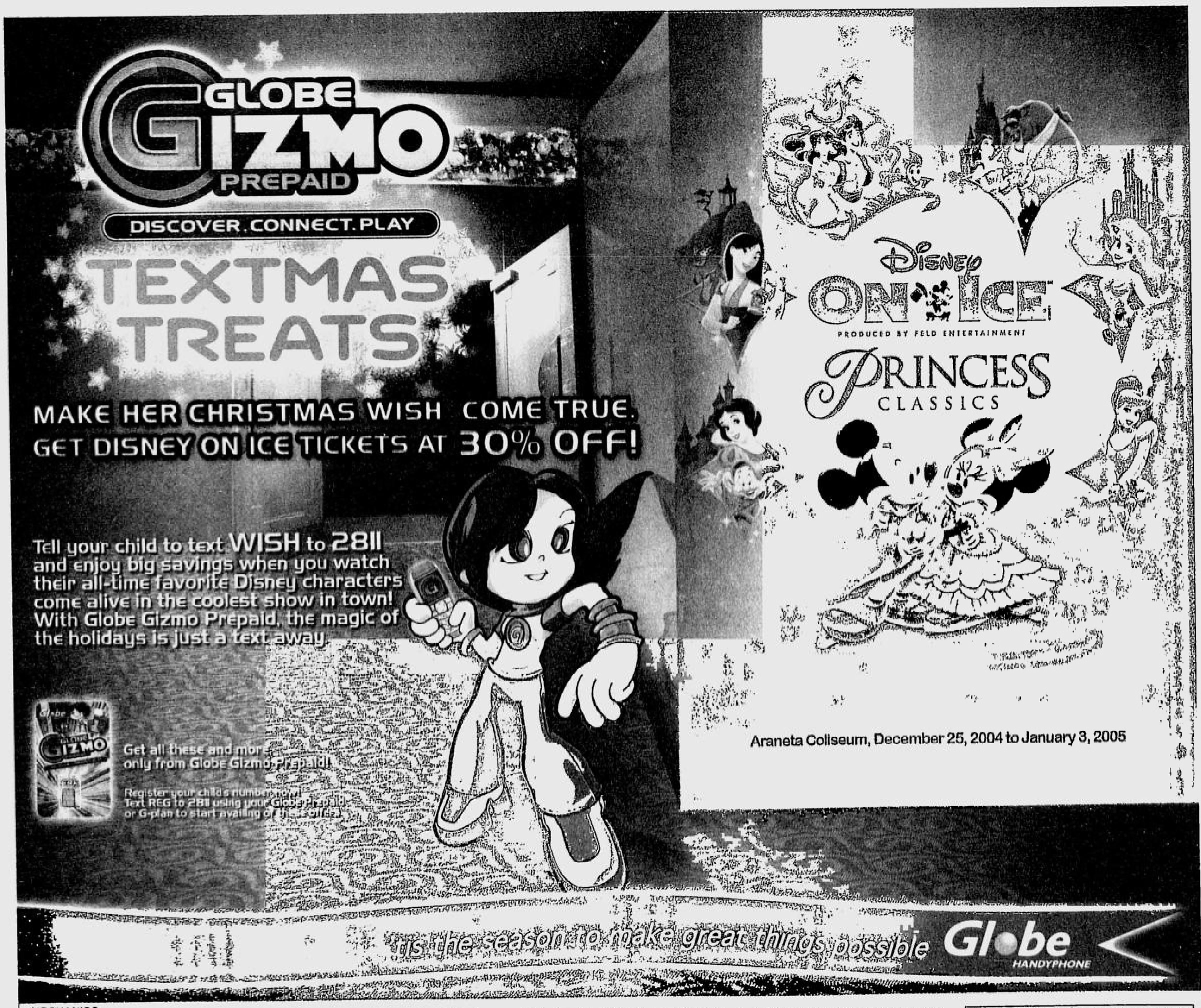

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PROMO PERIOD:
December 10, 2004 to January 15, 2005

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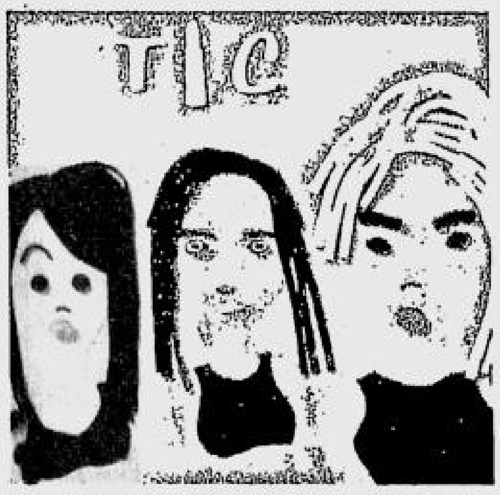
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5692, Series of 2004

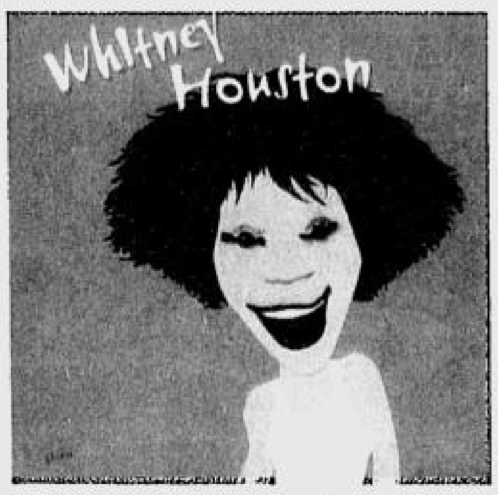
Super Selections

It's a little bit funny, this feeling inside... I guess it's just that the Christmas season is within us, bringing out the cheesy Christmas side in all of us...

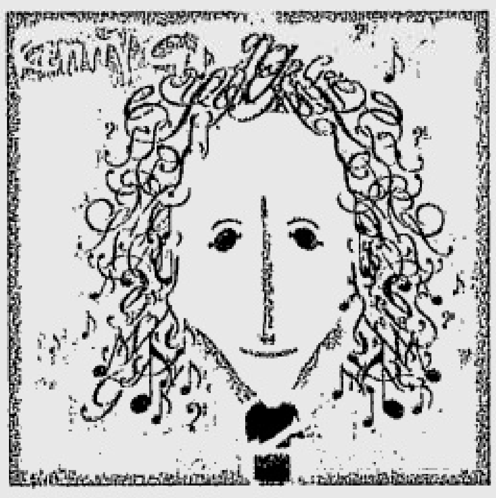
Here's an "artistic" musical lineup from BMG. Check it out before singing 'Jingle Bells'



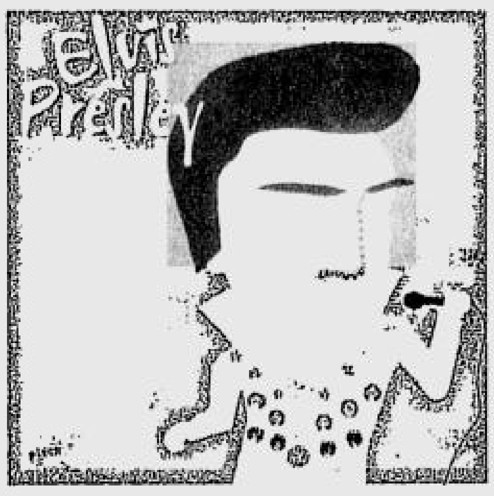
THOUGH TLC's career has been laden with drama after Lisa "Left Eye Lopez" died in an accident, they've left behind a 10-year legacy of excellent music, and in the process managed to become the best-selling and most influential female group the world has ever seen. They just don't want no scrubs.



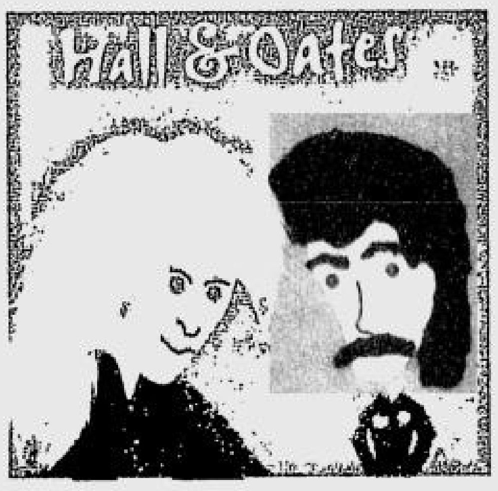
TO WITNESS Whitney Houston's accolades and commercial successes doesn't do justice to the one element that has remained the defining factor of this monumental career, her voice. The power, beauty and clarity of the performance in this collection show why Whitney is adored the world over. MC Hammer feels the same way.



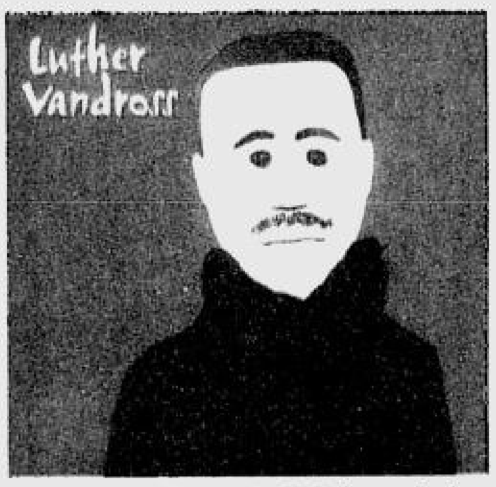
KENNY G is without doubt the best selling instrumentalist in the world, with an astonishing 70 million records sold during an illustrious career that spans three decades. An international superstar who has earned countless prestigious awards as a master craftsman through 13 best-selling albums. He seriously needs a perm, though.



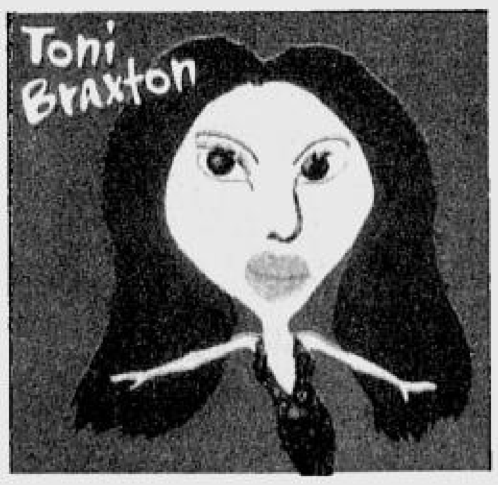
IT IS hard to think of Elvis Presley as the greatest vocalist of our time and the biggest selling artist in the history of pop music. It is also amazing how he juggled his career as a performer at the tender age of 18. Not only was he the embodiment of American popular music, he is also regarded as one of America's icons from one o' clock, two o' clock, three o' clock rock.



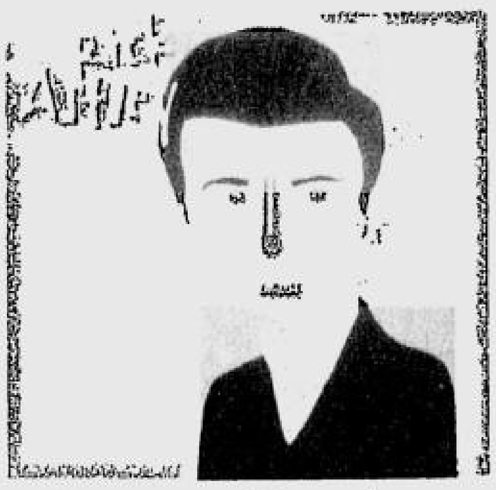
DARYL Hall and John Oates have captured their own smooth interpretation of Philly soul that has brought them. Not to be confused with cereal.



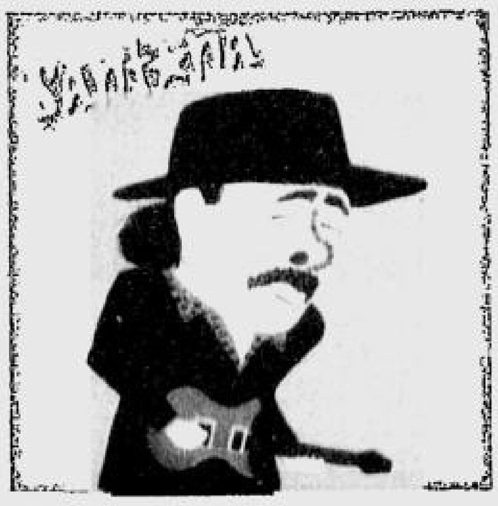
UNLIKE his colleagues in the industry, Luther Vandross did not cross over to widespread pop appeal just to earn fame and fortune. But hey, he's here, so who's to complain?



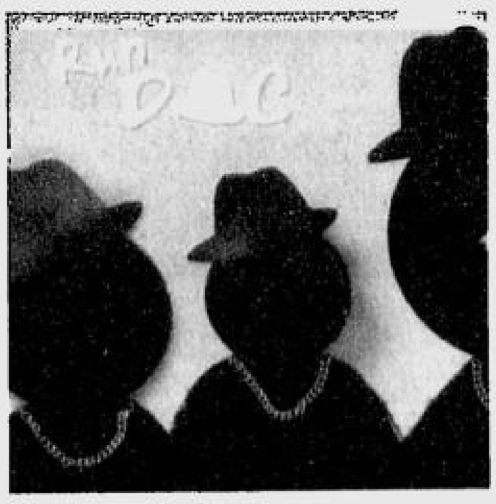
AFTER leaving the scene for awhile a few years ago, Toni Braxton made a comeback that showed she was destined to become an industry legend, amassing global sales of 40 million in albums, singles and videos. So, unbreak our hearts, Toni.



MANY were surprised by how such a powerful voice belonged to the 21-year-old Rick Astley when his single "Never Gonna Give You Up" went to the top of the charts of several countries. It seemed as if Astley could do no wrong in his domination around the globe. Please come to Manila!



CARLOS Santana continues to radiate his global soul, playing new songs, live jams and the old hits that brought him popularity and musical acclaim back in the day of the "longhairs." You're so, so smooth...



CONSIDERED as one of the "Grand-daddies of HipHop," Run DMC broke the barriers in both sound and sales, their charismatic flows and production took the music industry by storm. Yo, yes, yes, yo!

Drink up or speak up. Our continued reliance on imported fossil fuels like coal and oil for energy is one of the largest reasons behind problems like global warming, air pollution, the rise in respiratory ailments, and the worsening condition of our water supplies. This dependence also leaves us economically vulnerable to the spiralling cost of coal and oil in the world market. And things will only get murkier unless we reduce our use of coal and oil and push for the increased use of renewable energy sources like geothermal, wind, biomass, hydro, and solar. Speak up and let the government know you want clean energy. Text WWF YES <Your Name> to 2366 for Globe (P2.50/text) or log on to www.powerswitch.org.ph/vote. Act now and help get the Renewable Energy Bill passed into law. Maybe then, the future won't be such a hard thing to swallow.

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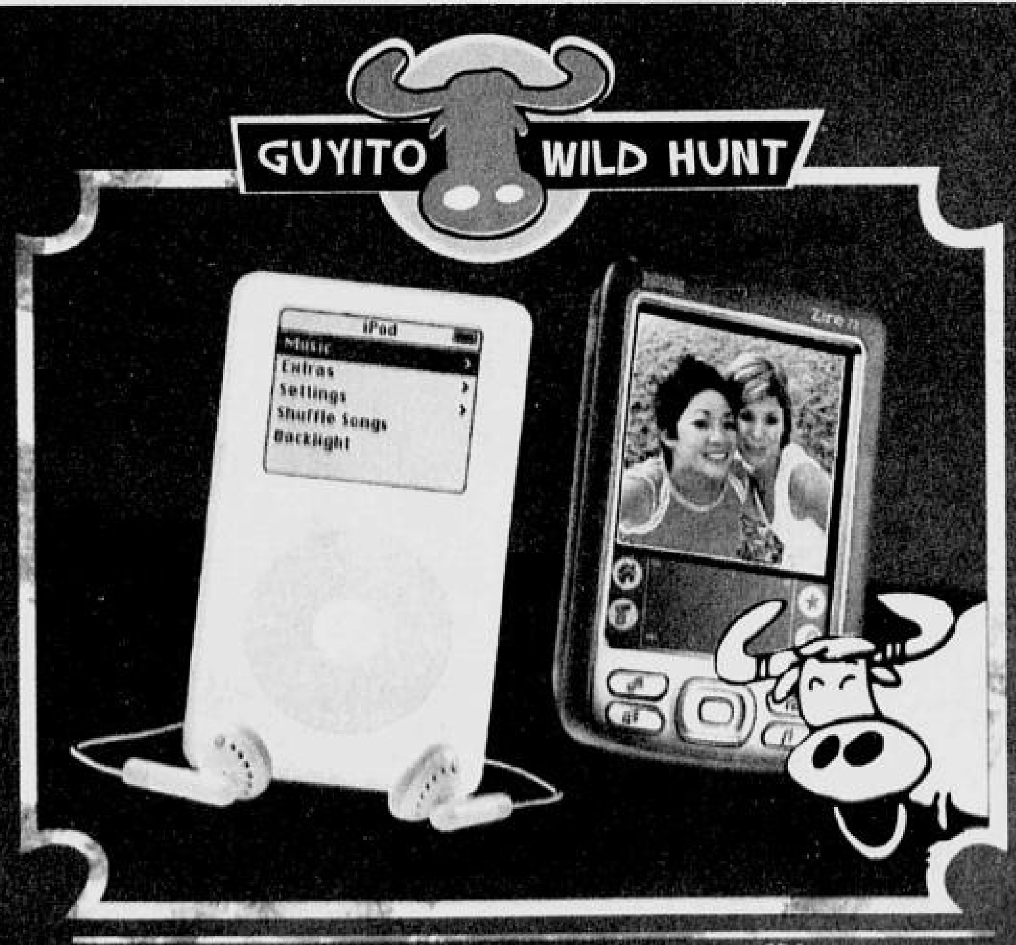

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Per DTI Permit No. 2147, Series of 2004.

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THE MERCHANT of music delivers songs with a message.

Natalie Merchant . . .

From page D1

dancing up her otherworldly combo of traditional and ethnic moves. The singer would later pursue a career minus the Maniacs, citing that she didn't want to make "art by committee" anymore.

In the 12 years that she spent with them, the band made six albums, four of which enjoyed resounding commercial success. In some of them, she designed their lyric sheets to look like very readable book chapters.

Merchant and the Maniacs briefly "reunited" early this year for a two-CD retrospective, "Campfire Songs," which contains radio hits and previously unreleased material. This follows Merchant's fifth solo release, "The House Carpenter's Daughter," an independent album where she covers obscure folk anthems.

The multiple "Parent-Teacher Award" winner still continues to sketch, paint, garden and write haikus and songs during her days off. Now a new mom, ardent fans like myself are looking forward to hearing how this change makes her music all the more picturesque and heart-tugging.

A rundown of some of Natalie Merchant's subject matter and the corresponding songs:

Illiteracy. In the song "Cherry Tree," Merchant speaks as an elderly person who can't read: "I've been watching, and wondering/ why your face is changing with every line you read."

War. "The Big Parade" is an emotional eulogy for soldiers killed in Vietnam, while "Grey Victory" describes in vivid detail the immediate destruction caused by the atomic bomb.

Self-esteem for adolescent girls. The playful ditty "Tell Yourself" contains the piercing line: "You'll never be like the anorexic beauties in the magazines."

Mourning a loved one's passing. She takes the persona of an old man whose wife of 50 years died of a painful illness in "Beloved Wife." Another song, "River," is dedicated to Merchant's actor friend, River Phoenix.

Multiple personality disorder. In "Katrina's Fair," some of Merchant's most vivid imagery is featured. One of nine different personalities has a unique hobby: "Be careful not to spoil her/ Calico printed pinafore composite traits mannerists/ all others dissipate!"

Family. Fond memories abound in "Tension Makes a Tangle," while a daughter reaches out to a problematic parent in "Trouble Me." In "Cotton Alley," the perspective is that of a little girl's and her troubles with her prankster brother.

Sex and violence in entertainment. "Candy Everybody Wants" is a caustic commentary about crass entertainment ploys: "If blood and love taste so sweet/ then we give 'em what they want!"

Injustice. She sings as a black man wrongfully accused in "I'm Not the Man." "Among the Americans" decries the fate of Native Americans. "Saint Judas" is an angry holler against human rights violations.

Personal Heroes. "Hey Jack Kerouack" extols the legendary beat poet: "Hip flask slinging madmen/ steaming café flirts/ they all spoke through you." Her ethereal ballad "Henry Darger, meanwhile, is about an eccentric artist who drew stories for children.

Gratitude. Lyrically, "Kind and Generous" is Merchant's simplest song, but it's one of her favorites. Thousands of people in her concerts sing along to its "Thank you, thank you" parts.

Poverty. A mother tells the difficulty of being poor in "Dust Bowl." Truly a morose ballad and a topic that few people sing about.

Female archetypes. "Ophelia" cleverly gathers seven different women of the same name. This was also a short film where Merchant starred as the various characters. Clips of it show an existing sense of humor!

Concerned parents. She sings about a strong lady from the home front in "My Mother the War," and an angry family man in "Poison in the Well."

Philosophy. "Everyone a Puzzle Lover" delivers sharp wit as she addresses befuddling issues such as morality, belief systems and social status.

Child abuse. Really bad parents inflict physical abuse in "What's the Matter Here?" A variation on the theme, verbal abuse, inspired "Life is Sweet."

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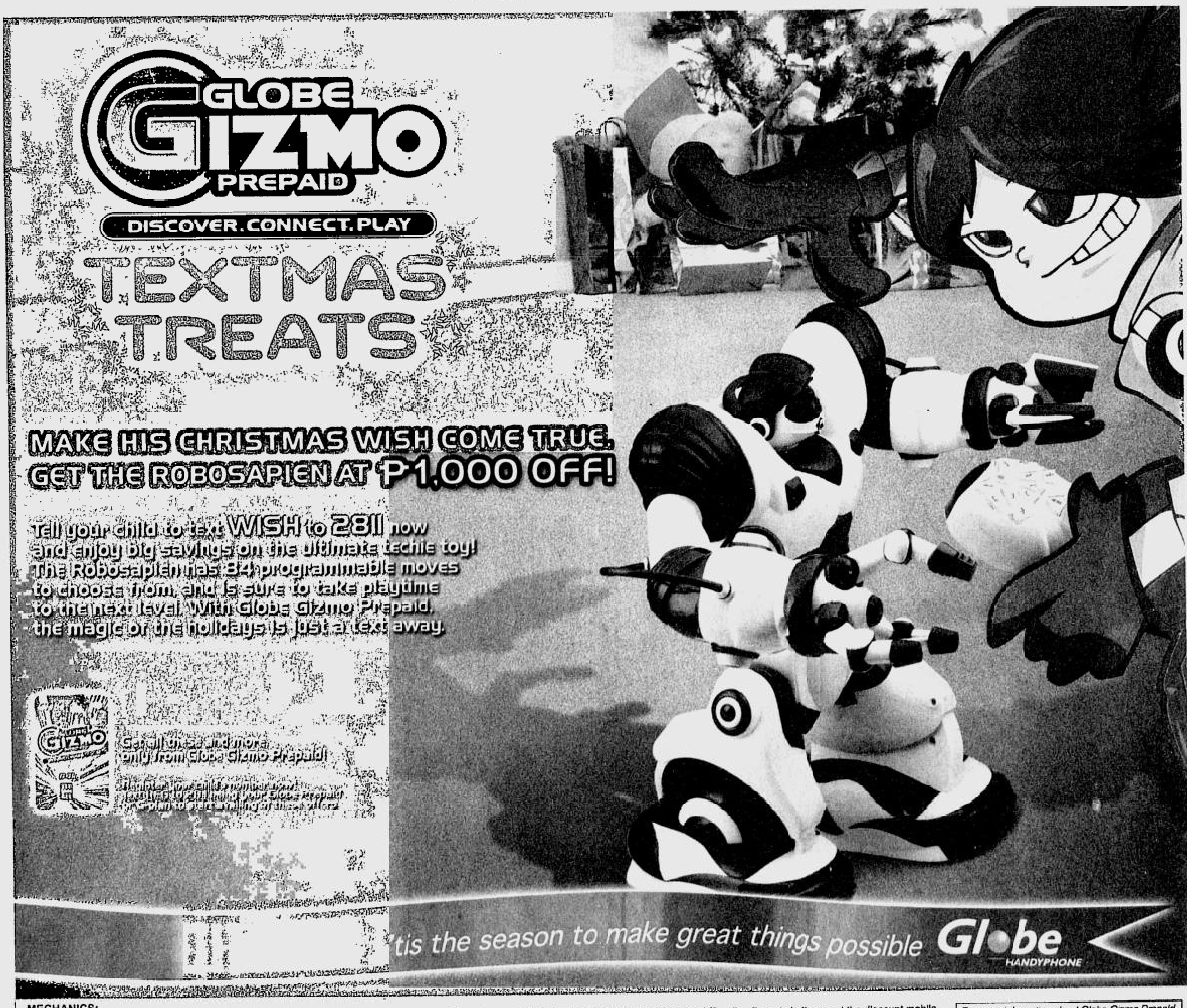

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Globe HANDYPHONE

MECHANICS:
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- 15% off on clothes purchased at all Guess Kids outlets in GMA from December 10 to January 15.
- 20% discount (₱1,000 off) with every 14" Robosapien purchase at participating Kidz Station, Rustan and Toy Kingdom outlets in GMA, Cavite, Pampanga and Batangas from December 10 to January 15.

Sample Mobile Coupon:
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PROMO PERIOD:
December 10, 2004 to January 15, 2005

For more information about Globe Gizmo Prepaid, call GlobeTelecom Customer Service at 730-1000.

Rustan
Kidz Station
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For inquiries, call 898-1933 to 42 loc. 207.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6992, Series of 2004.

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THE MERCHANT of music delivers songs with a message.

Natalie Merchant . . .

From page D1

dancing up her otherworldly combo of traditional and ethnic moves. The singer would later pursue a career minus the Maniacs, citing that she didn't want to make "art by committee" anymore.

In the 12 years that she spent with them, the band made six albums, four of which enjoyed resounding commercial success. In some of them, she designed their lyric sheets to look like very readable book chapters.

Merchant and the Maniacs briefly "reunited" early this year for a two-CD retrospective, "Campfire Songs," which contains radio hits and previously unreleased material. This follows Merchant's fifth solo release, "The House Carpenter's Daughter," an independent album where she covers obscure folk anthems.

The multiple "Parent-Teacher Award" winner still continues to sketch, paint, garden and write haikus and songs during her days off. Now a new mom, ardent fans like myself are looking forward to hearing how this change makes her music all the more picturesque and heart-tugging.

A rundown of some of Natalie Merchant's subject matter and the corresponding songs:

Illiteracy. In the song "Cherry Tree," Merchant speaks as an elderly person who can't read: "I've been watching, and wondering/ why your face is changing with every line you read."

War. "The Big Parade" is an emotional eulogy for soldiers killed in Vietnam, while "Grey Victory" describes in vivid detail the immediate destruction caused by the atomic bomb.

Self-esteem for adolescent girls. The playful ditty "Tell Yourself" contains the piercing line: "You'll never be like the anorexic beauties in the magazines."

Mourning a loved one's passing. She takes the persona of an old man whose wife of 50 years died of a painful illness in "Beloved Wife." Another song, "River," is dedicated to Merchant's actor friend, River Phoenix.

Multiple personality disorder. In "Katrina's Fair," some of Merchant's most vivid imagery is featured. One of nine different personalities has a unique hobby: "Be careful not to spoil her/ Calico printed pinafore composite traits mannerists/ all others dissipate!"

Family. Fond memories abound in "Tension Makes a Tangle," while a daughter reaches out to a problematic parent in "Trouble Me." In "Cotton Alley," the perspective is that of a little girl's and her troubles with her prankster brother.

Sex and violence in entertainment. "Candy Everybody Wants" is a caustic commentary about crass entertainment ploys: "If blood and love taste so sweet/ then we give 'em what they want!"

Injustice. She sings as a black man wrongfully accused in "I'm Not the Man." "Among the Americans" decries the fate of Native Americans. "Saint Judas" is an angry holler against human rights violations.

Personal Heroes. "Hey Jack Kerouack" extols the legendary beat poet: "Hip flask slinging madmen/ steaming café flirts/ they all spoke through you." Her ethereal ballad "Henry Darger, meanwhile, is about an eccentric artist who drew stories for children.

Gratitude. Lyrically, "Kind and Generous" is Merchant's simplest song, but it's one of her favorites. Thousands of people in her concerts sing along to its "Thank you, thank you" parts.

Poverty. A mother tells the difficulty of being poor in "Dust Bowl." Truly a morose ballad and a topic that few people sing about.

Female archetypes. "Ophelia" cleverly gathers seven different women of the same name. This was also a short film where Merchant starred as the various characters. Clips of it show an existing sense of humor!

Concerned parents. She sings about a strong lady from the home front in "My Mother the War," and an angry family man in "Poison in the Well."

Philosophy. "Everyone a Puzzle Lover" delivers sharp wit as she addresses befuddling issues such as morality, belief systems and social status.

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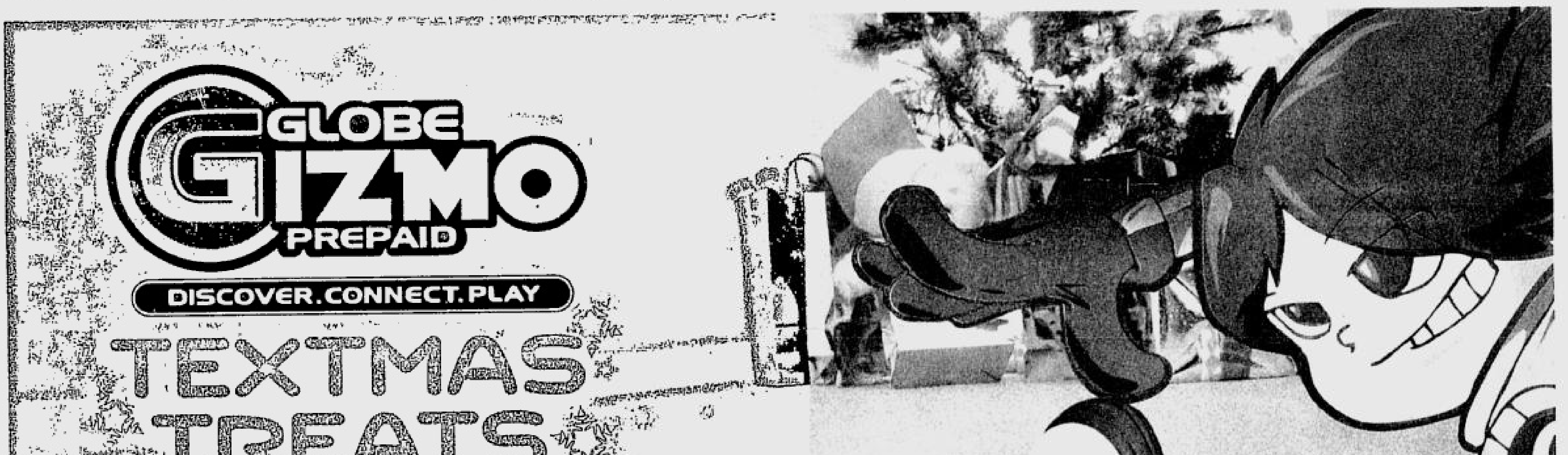

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No 6992, Series of 2004.

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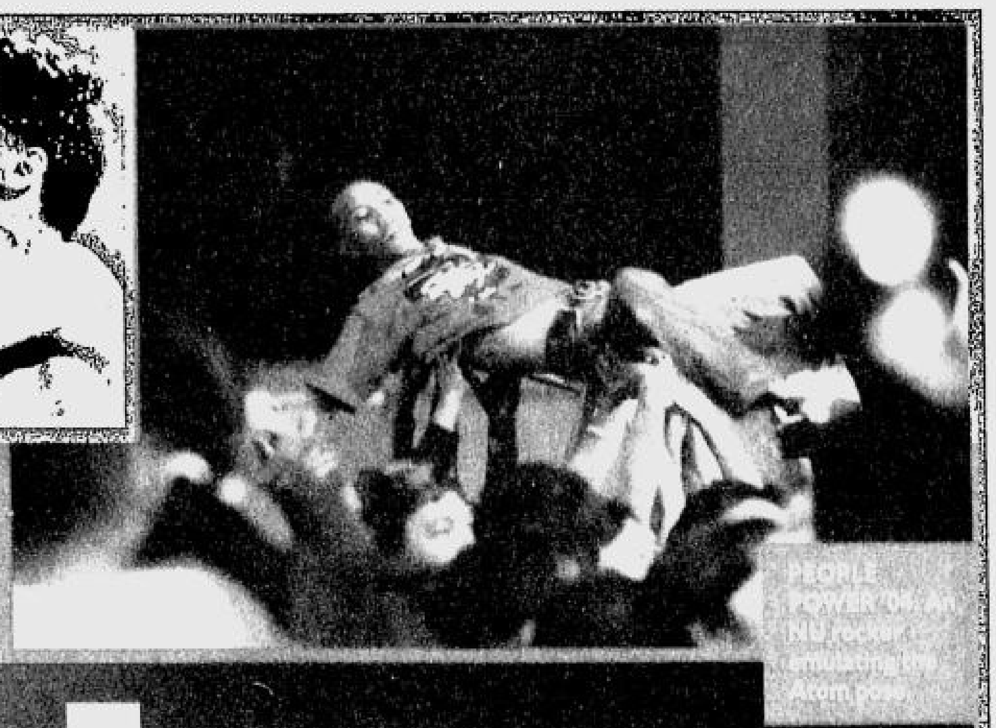
STYLISTICS. The Late Isabel vocalist Wawi Navarroza, jazzes it up.

ROCKERS for peace

SOULFUL singing from Kjwan frontman Marc Abaya



PEOPLE POWER '04. An NU rocker emulating the Atom pose.

Icons and outcasts

By Tim Yap
Photos by Carlo Ma. Guerrero

Rockers are never scared to get wet. In fact, the NU Rock Awards gave rollers more reasons to revel in the torrents of music and madness that usually comes with the annual awards fete which just gets bigger and better every year.

WHAT: Atom Henares' belts-and-leather fest also known as the NU 107 Rock Awards held at the World Trade Center,

WHO: Thousands of head banging, Red Horse loving folk out to rock till they see the Sun, Bimbos and Bamboo on the same stage. An anything goes showcase of what the local scene has to offer. A surprise performance by UK rock act The Barbs.

WHO ELSE: This year, models made a scene, Phoemela Baranda, Rissa Samson and Nicolette Boll as presenters. I spotted John Lloyd Cruz and Iza Calzado in a sea of rocker dudes and dudettes. Bold stars continued to rule. Ara Mina, Aubrey Miles did more than just answer your phone via their ringtunes. But Asia Agcaoili stole the scene when she rubbed Atom's birdie (actually the eagle on his buckle belt) and flashed her own toy–a battery-operated-blue-rubber-dildo! And the crowd went wild. "Asia! Asia! Asia!" they screamed, not referring to our continent, but to the heavenly body in front of them.

WHAT ELSE: It was Bamboo's night, with the crowd agreeing in unison with every award that came their way. Their final song, "Noypi" has become the year's undisputed rock anthem. Hoy!

NOYPI [illegible] Bamboo sings [illegible] victory at NU 107 [illegible] Awards

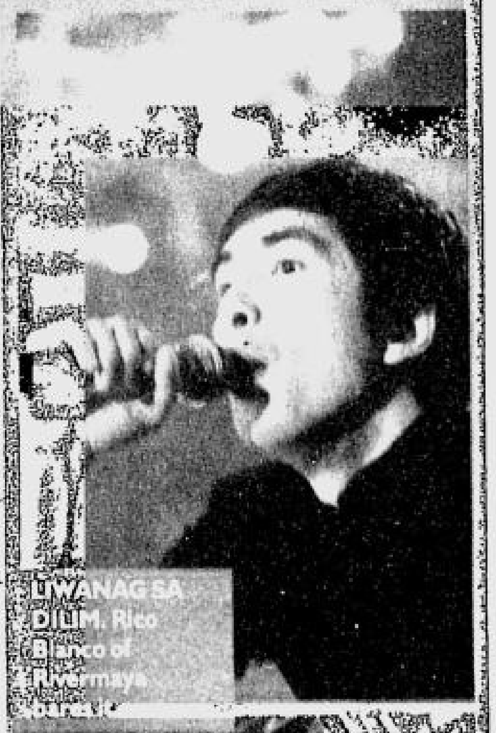
LIFE is a cabaret, old chum. Come to the cabaret!

SPINE TINGLING SERENADE. Jamir Garcia of Slapshock

MUSIC and madness amidst the storm

SKA SENSATION. Myra Ruaro of Brownbeat All [illegible]

SO WHAT? You lookin' at [illegible]



LIWANAG SA DILIM. Rico Blanco of Rivermaya [illegible]

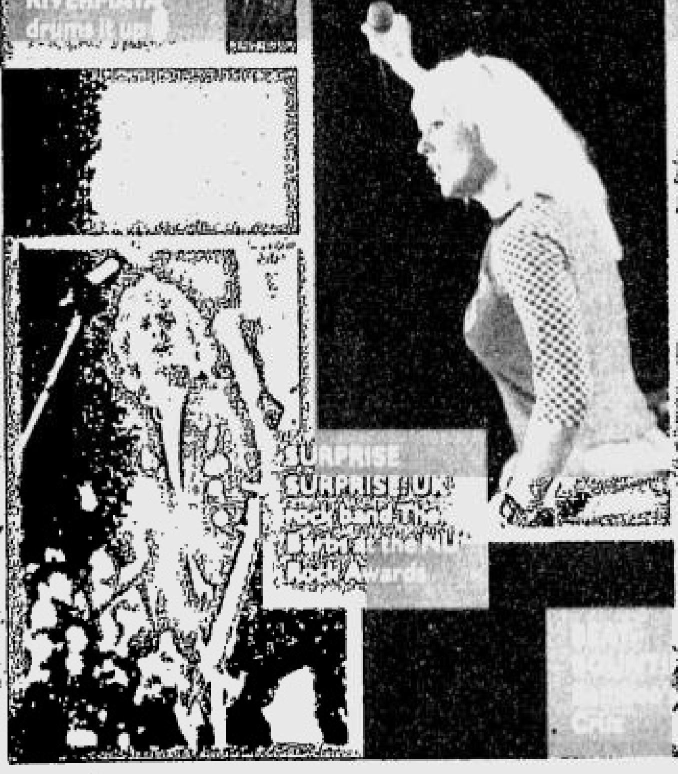
FULL-SPIRITED ARTIST. Nathan Azarcon of Bamboo

RIVERMAYA drums it up.

REGGAE MASTER. Papa Dom of Tropical Depression

NAKED MUSIC. Rock scene icon and VJ Marc Abaya

ROCK BABY ROCK. Eat your mic out!



SURPRISE SURPRISE. UK rock band The Barbs at the NU Rock Awards

[illegible] Cruz

[illegible] Atom Henares and Asia Agcaoili

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MUSIC and madness [illegible]

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RIVERMAY drums it up

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NAKED MUSIC: Rock scene icon and VJ Marc Abaya

BABY [illegible]

SURPRISE SURPRISE: UK rock band The Barbs at the NU 107 Rock Awards

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2004 NU107 rock awards winners

Best new artist: Orange and Lemons
Band of the year: Bamboo
Song of the year: Noypi by Bamboo
Album of the year: Influence by Urbandub
Best music video: Astro by Radioactive Sago Project Directed by R.A. Rivera
Best album packaging: Novena by Slapshock Designed by Willie A. Monzon and Team Manila
Vocalist of the year: Bamboo Mañalac of Bamboo
Guitarist of the year: Jerome Astro Velasco of The Mongols
Bassist of the year: Buddy Zabala of Twisted Halo and Cambio
Drummer of the year: Vic Mercado of Bamboo
Producer of the year: Sandwich for Thanks to the Moon's Gravitational Pull
Raw award: The Late Isabel
Rising Sun award: Sponge Cola
Female rock icon: Cynthia Alexander
Hall of Fame: The Jerks

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Promo Period: Sept. 27- Dec. 14, 2004
Deadline of Entries:
Monthly Draws: October 17 and Nov. 17, 2004
Grand Draw: Dec. 14, 2004
Draw Dates:
Monthly Draw: October 22 and Nov. 22, 2004
Grand Draw: Dec. 21, 2004

See posters and print ads for details.
Per DTI Permit No. 2147, series of 2004

Drop in drop boxes located at Ayala and Robinson's cinema lobbies, and all LBC and Netopia branches. You may also mail entries to: Guyito Wild Hunt, PDI Bldg., corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City

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lifestyle + clothing
bench
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at Market! Market!
Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig
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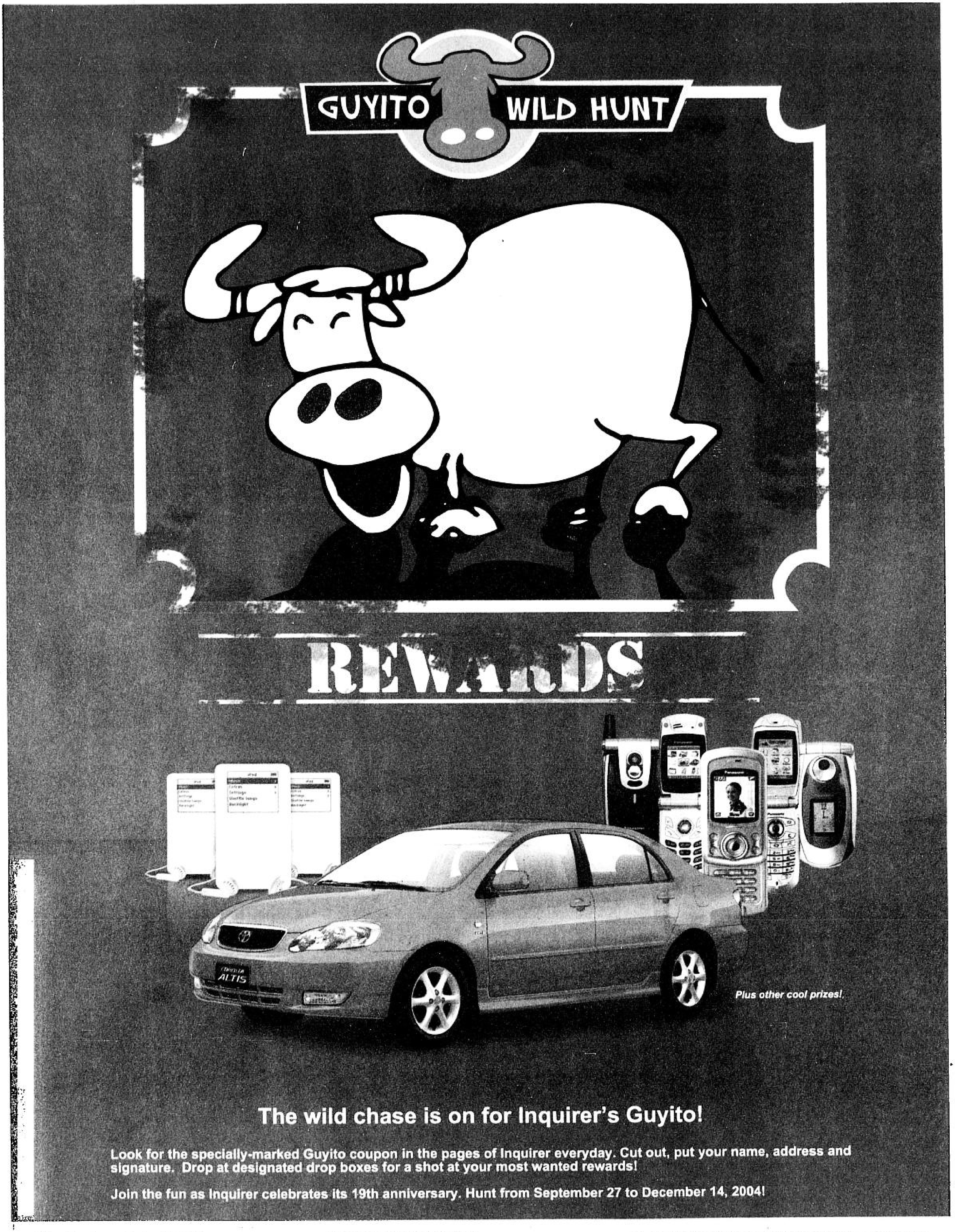

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Look for the specially-marked Guyito coupon in the pages of Inquirer everyday. Cut out, put your name, address and signature. Drop at designated drop boxes for a shot at your most wanted rewards!

Join the fun as Inquirer celebrates its 19th anniversary. Hunt from September 27 to December 14, 2004!

Prizes (One winner per item)

Grand Prize
Toyota Altis 1.6J M/T

MONTHLY DRAW

October Draw
IPAQ rz1710
Olympus MJU300
Finepix a202
Epson Printer
Blackberry 7230
Canon A70 Digicam
20 GB iPod

November Draw
20 GB iPod
HP dj450 Portable Printer
Olympus MJU400
Fujipix f402
Epson Printer
Panasonic X400
Motorola MPX 200
Motorola C380

Consolation
Palm Zire 72
IPAQ
Olympus 400
Finepix f401
Epson Printer
Panasonic X500
Panasonic X700
Blackberry 7230
Canon A70 Digicam
Motorola E398
Motorola C650
Motorola V3
40GB iPod
20GB iPod
Motorola C650
Panasonic X300
Palm Zire 31
Epson CX5300 Printer
Canon A70 Digicam

PROMO MECHANICS:

a) Each copy of the Philippine Daily Inquirer will contain a specially-marked coupon featuring Guyito, the broadsheet's illustrated carabao icon, hidden in one of the pages. The hidden Guyito will appear in the PDI daily from September 27 to December 14, 2004.
b) Participant can then cut-out the Guyito coupon, write down legibly his/her name, address, contact number and affix signature on the blanks provided, and send to Philippine Daily Inquirer offices or drop in drop boxes. Only original Guyito coupons will be considered valid entries. Original coupons are marked with the Guyito Wild Hunt promo logo.
c) Only one Guyito coupon will be featured in each Inquirer issue from Monday to Saturday. There will be two Guyito coupons featured in Inquirer every Sunday.
d) There are two ways to send entries:
    1. Mail to:
        Guyito Wild Hunt: Inquirer 19th Anniversary Promo
        c/o PDI Building Don Chino Roces Avenue,
        Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City
    2. Drop in drop boxes located at the following:
        Robinsons Movieworld cinema lobbies (all branches)
        Glorietta mall
        Glorietta 1 Cinema Lobby
        Glorietta 4 Cinema Lobby
        Greenbelt 1 Cinema Lobby
        Greenbelt 1 Mall
        Greenbelt 3 Customer Service
        Greenbelt 3 Cinema Lobby
        Alabang Town Center Mall
        Alabang Town Center Cinema Lobby
        Ayala Center Cebu Mall
        Ayala Center Cebu Cinema Lobby
        Netopia (all branches)
        LBC (all branches)
e) For the monthly draws, deadline of entries are on October 17 and November 17. Monthly winners will be drawn on October 22 and November 22, 3pm, at the Philippine Daily Inquirer head office. Winners will be notified thru a phone call and registered mail from a Philippine Daily Inquirer representative. Non-winning entries per draw will be included in the succeeding draws. The list of monthly winners will be published within two weeks after the draw.
f) Deadline of entries for the grand draw is on December 14. Mailed-in entries must be received by December 17. Grand draw and consolation prize winners will be drawn on December 21, 2004 at 12nn. Grand prize winner will win a brand new Toyota Altis.
g) A winner can only win once per draw. If a name gets drawn more than once, he/she gets the prize of higher value. Prize categories are: monthly prize, consolation prize, and grand prize.
h) All winners below 18 years of age need to be with their legal guardian to claim prize. Both the minor and the parent/guardian should present valid identification. The latter should also present proof that he/she is the legal guardian of the minor.
i) Prizes are transferable but not convertible to cash.
j) For more questions call Ms. Ching dela Cruz of Inquirer's Marketing Department at 897-8808 loc 237.
k) Metro Manila winners may claim their prizes at the Philippine Daily Inquirer office at the Philippine Daily Inquirer Building, Chino Roces Avenue (Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City. Provincial winners may claim their prizes at the nearest Inquirer office indicated on the registered mail. Winners may claim their prize from October 18.
l) All winners must present the following to an authorized Philippine Daily Inquirer representative:
    (1) Two valid IDs with complete real name, picture and correct address. Photocopies of any of the two documents (i.e. birth certificate, marriage contract, SSS ID, driver's license, school ID and/or passport) should be submitted upon claiming of prize.
    (2) Registered mail that the Philippine Daily Inquirer sent to the winner of the Guyito Wild Hunt raffle draw.
    (3) Representative's valid identification and authorization letter from the winner (if prize is claimed through a representative)
m) All prizes must be claimed within sixty (60) days from receipt of notification call and registered mail (whichever comes last) from an authorized Philippine Daily Inquirer representative.
n) All unclaimed prizes after the said date shall be forfeited in favor of PDI with prior DTI approval.

PROMO EXCLUSIONS:

All employees of Philippine Daily Inquirer, Harrison Communications and their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are not eligible to join the promo.

Per DTI Permit No. 2147, Series of 2004.

E-ma[illegible]@inquirer.com.ph

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Inquirer sup name/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Super! wants YOU!

Super! is looking for creative capers searching for an outlet.

It doesn't matter if you have a previous mental record, if you eat cereal for breakfast, lunch and dinner, or if you have a penchant for the Sex Bomb Dancers. (We've got our own quirks, so no judgment.)

Stop writing on your wall, quit painting with nail polish, don't waste your ramblings on friends who don't listen.

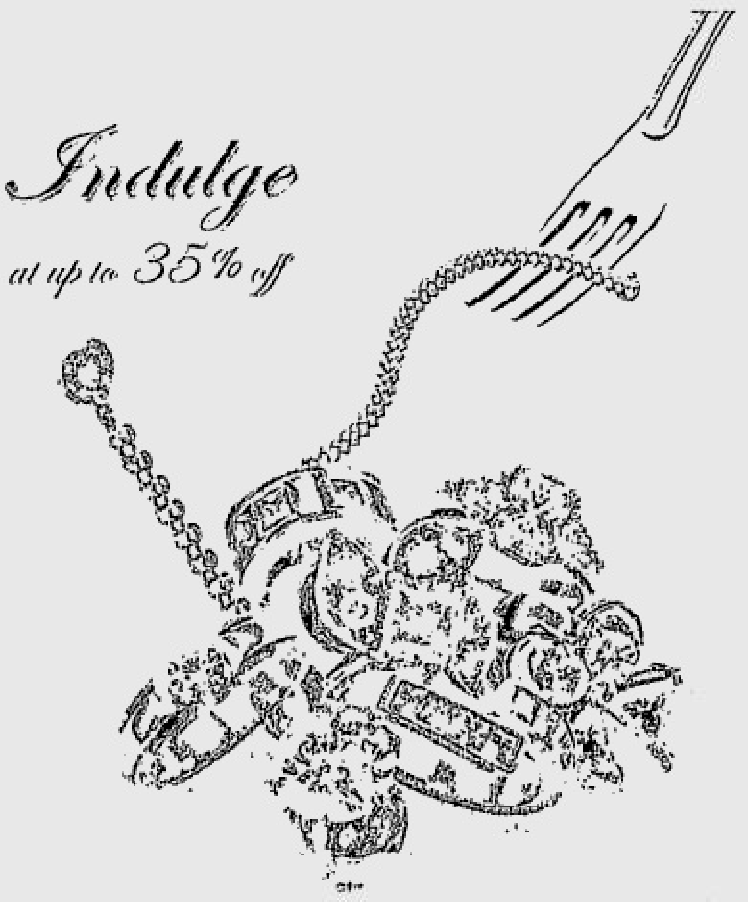
Prepare your portfolios, summon your creativity, gather enough courage and wow us today, when you show up at the Philippine Daily Inquirer for the screening of the new members of the Super! team.

We need writers, photographers, stylists and artists.

Start strutting your stuff at 2 p.m. Screening will officially start at 3:30 p.m.

Please come in costume.

(And here's a tip: practice a monologue on why you think you're Super!)



Enjoy up to 35% discount at Moissanite Jewellery's Christmas Indulgence Sale from December 3 to 31, 2004.

For credit card purchases, discount price is 5% less than the cash purchase discount and applies only to selected items.
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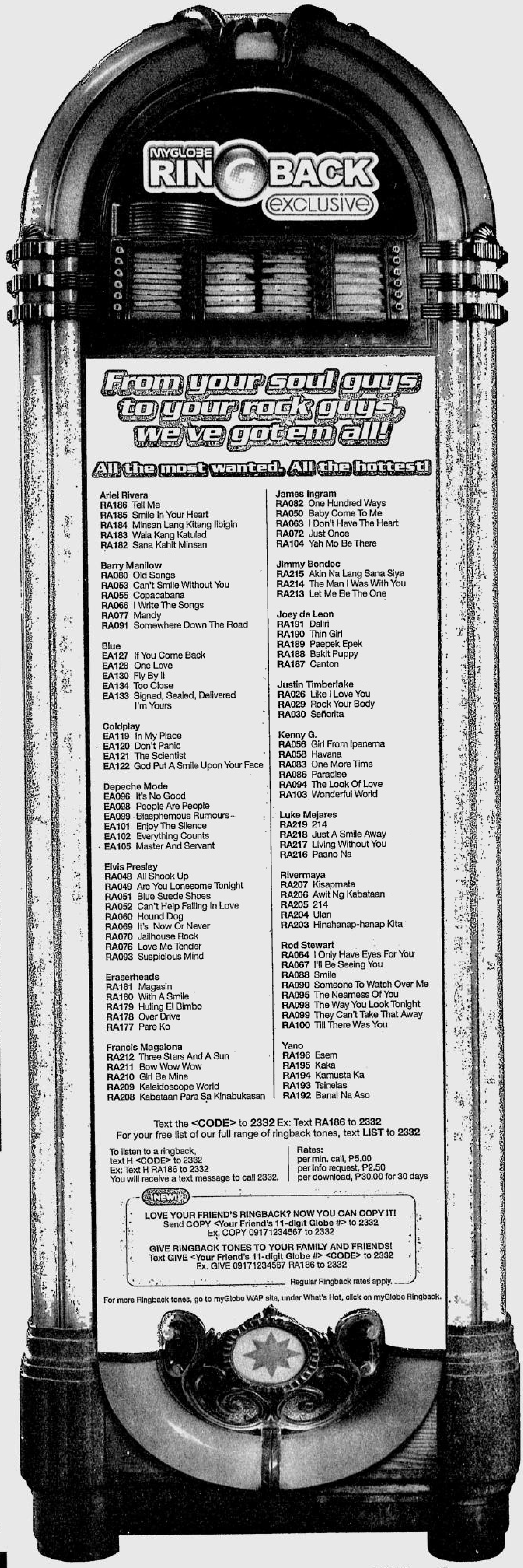
Per DTI-NCR Permit No 3199, Series of 2004



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RA185 Smile In Your Heart
RA184 Minsan Lang Kitang Ibigin
RA183 Wala Kang Katulad
RA182 Sana Kahit Minsan

Barry Manilow
RA080 Old Songs
RA053 Can't Smile Without You
RA055 Copacabana
RA066 I Write The Songs
RA077 Mandy
RA091 Somewhere Down The Road

Blue
EA127 If You Come Back
EA128 One Love
EA130 Fly By II
EA134 Too Close
EA133 Signed, Sealed, Delivered I'm Yours

Coldplay
EA119 In My Place
EA120 Don't Panic
EA121 The Scientist
EA122 God Put A Smile Upon Your Face

Depeche Mode
EA096 It's No Good
EA098 People Are People
EA099 Blasphemous Rumours
EA101 Enjoy The Silence
EA102 Everything Counts
EA105 Master And Servant

Elvis Presley
RA048 All Shook Up
RA049 Are You Lonesome Tonight
RA051 Blue Suede Shoes
RA052 Can't Help Falling In Love
RA060 Hound Dog
RA069 It's Now Or Never
RA070 Jailhouse Rock
RA076 Love Me Tender
RA093 Suspicious Mind

Eraserheads
RA181 Magasin
RA180 With A Smile
RA179 Huling El Bimbo
RA178 Over Drive
RA177 Pare Ko

Francis Magalona
RA212 Three Stars And A Sun
RA211 Bow Wow Wow
RA210 Girl Be Mine
RA209 Kaleidoscope World
RA208 Kabataan Para Sa Kinabukasan

James Ingram
RA082 One Hundred Ways
RA050 Baby Come To Me
RA063 I Don't Have The Heart
RA072 Just Once
RA104 Yah Mo Be There

Jimmy Bondoc
RA215 Akin Na Lang Sana Siya
RA214 The Man I Was With You
RA213 Let Me Be The One

Joey de Leon
RA191 Daliri
RA190 Thin Girl
RA189 Paepek Epek
RA188 Bakit Puppy
RA187 Canton

Justin Timberlake
RA026 Like I Love You
RA029 Rock Your Body
RA030 Señorita

Kenny G.
RA056 Girl From Ipanema
RA058 Havana
RA083 One More Time
RA086 Paradise
RA094 The Look Of Love
RA103 Wonderful World

Luke Mejares
RA219 214
RA218 Just A Smile Away
RA217 Living Without You
RA216 Paano Na

Rivermaya
RA207 Kisapmata
RA206 Awit Ng Kabataan
RA205 214
RA204 Ulan
RA203 Hinahanap-hanap Kita

Rod Stewart
RA064 I Only Have Eyes For You
RA067 I'll Be Seeing You
RA088 Smile
RA090 Someone To Watch Over Me
RA095 The Nearness Of You
RA098 The Way You Look Tonight
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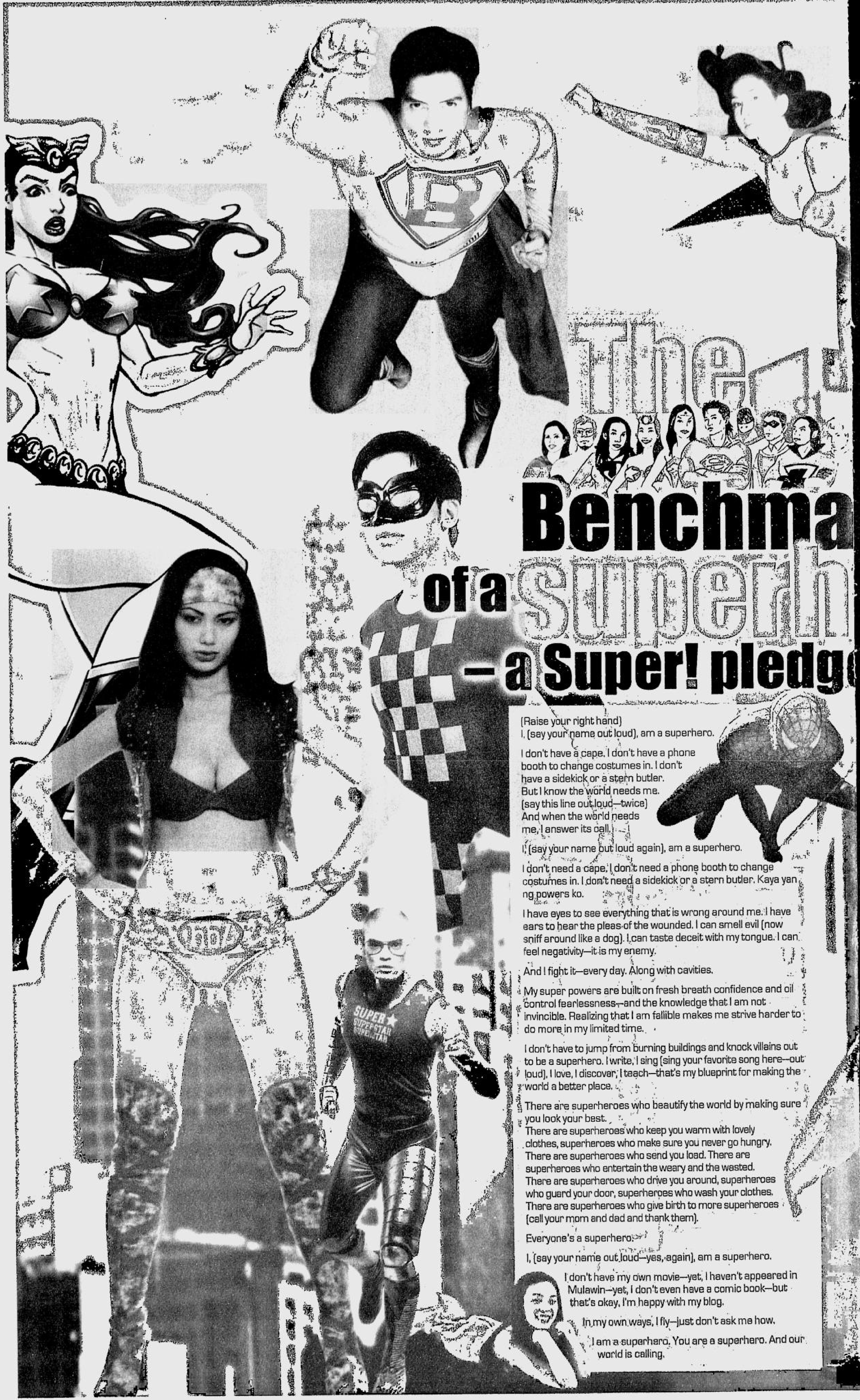

(Raise your right hand)
I, (say your name out loud), am a superhero.

I don't have a cape. I don't have a phone booth to change costumes in. I don't have a sidekick or a stern butler.
But I know the world needs me.
(say this line out loud—twice)
And when the world needs me, I answer its call.

I, (say your name out loud again), am a superhero.

I don't need a cape. I don't need a phone booth to change costumes in. I don't need a sidekick or a stern butler. Kaya yan ng powers ko.

I have eyes to see everything that is wrong around me. I have ears to hear the pleas of the wounded. I can smell evil (now sniff around like a dog). I can taste deceit with my tongue. I can feel negativity—it is my enemy.

And I fight it—every day. Along with cavities.

My super powers are built on fresh breath confidence and oil control fearlessness—and the knowledge that I am not invincible. Realizing that I am fallible makes me strive harder to do more in my limited time.

I don't have to jump from burning buildings and knock villains out to be a superhero. I write, I sing (sing your favorite song here—out loud), I love, I discover, I teach—that's my blueprint for making the world a better place.

There are superheroes who beautify the world by making sure you look your best.
There are superheroes who keep you warm with lovely clothes, superheroes who make sure you never go hungry.
There are superheroes who send you load. There are superheroes who entertain the weary and the wasted.
There are superheroes who drive you around, superheroes who guard your door, superheroes who wash your clothes.
There are superheroes who give birth to more superheroes (call your mom and dad and thank them).

Everyone's a superhero.

I, (say your name out loud—yes, again), am a superhero.

I don't have my own movie—yet, I haven't appeared in Mulawin—yet, I don't even have a comic book—but that's okay, I'm happy with my blog.

In my own ways, I fly—just don't ask me how.

I am a superhero. You are a superhero. And our world is calling.

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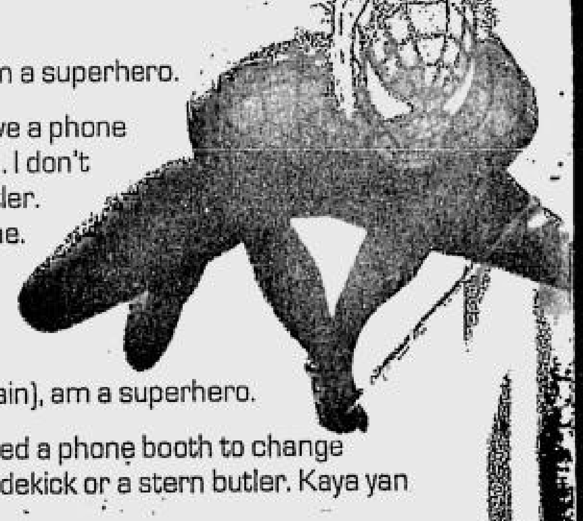

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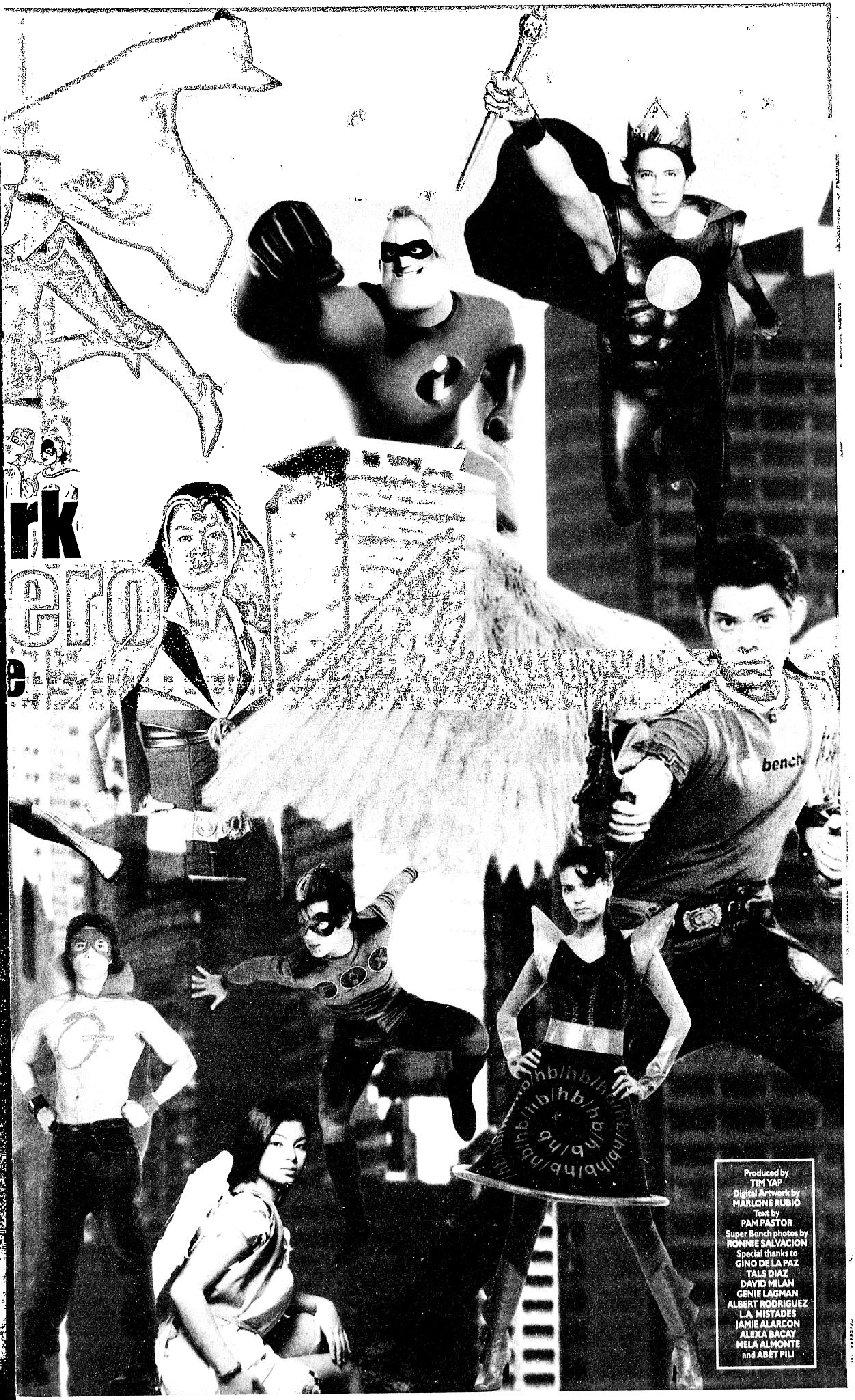
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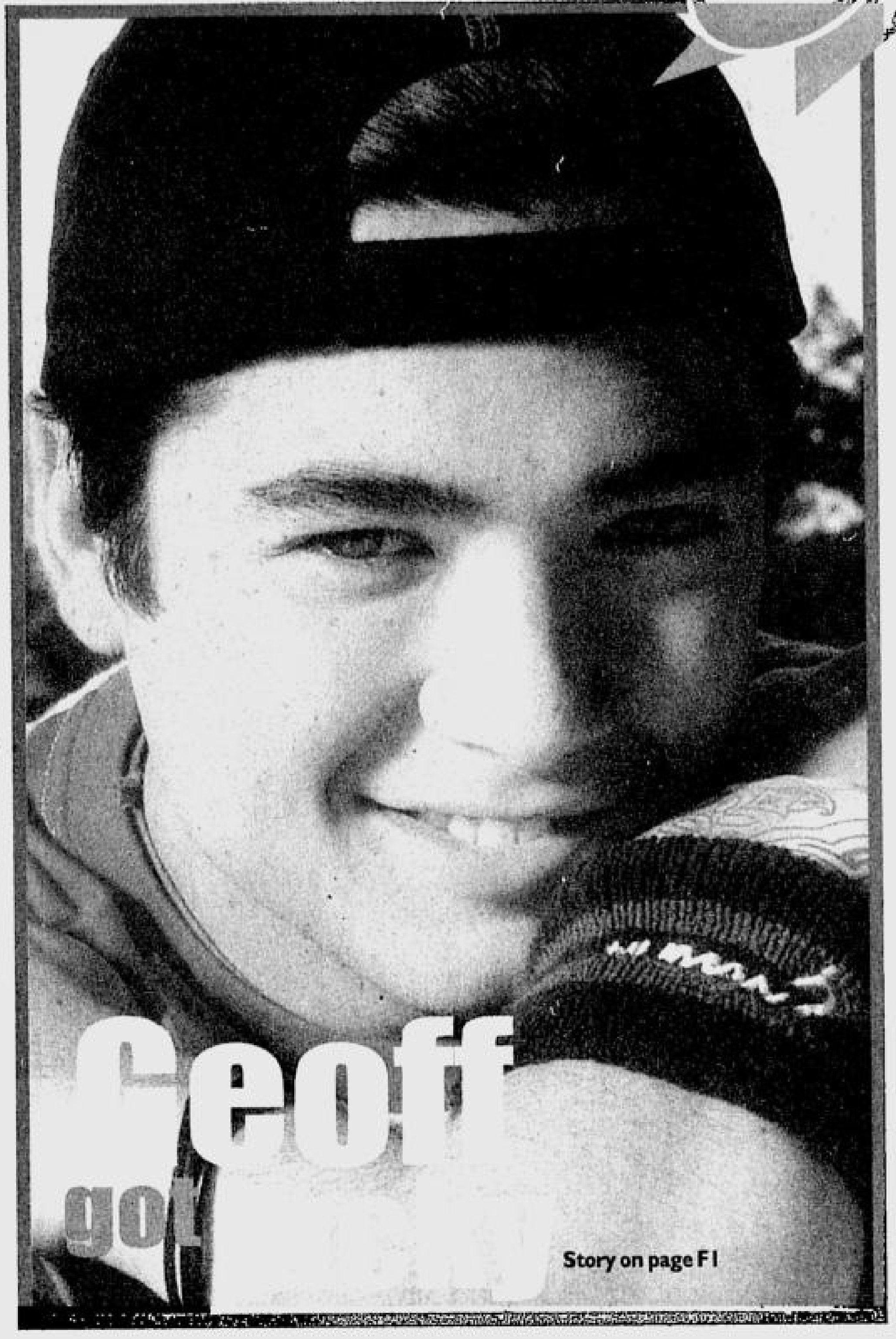

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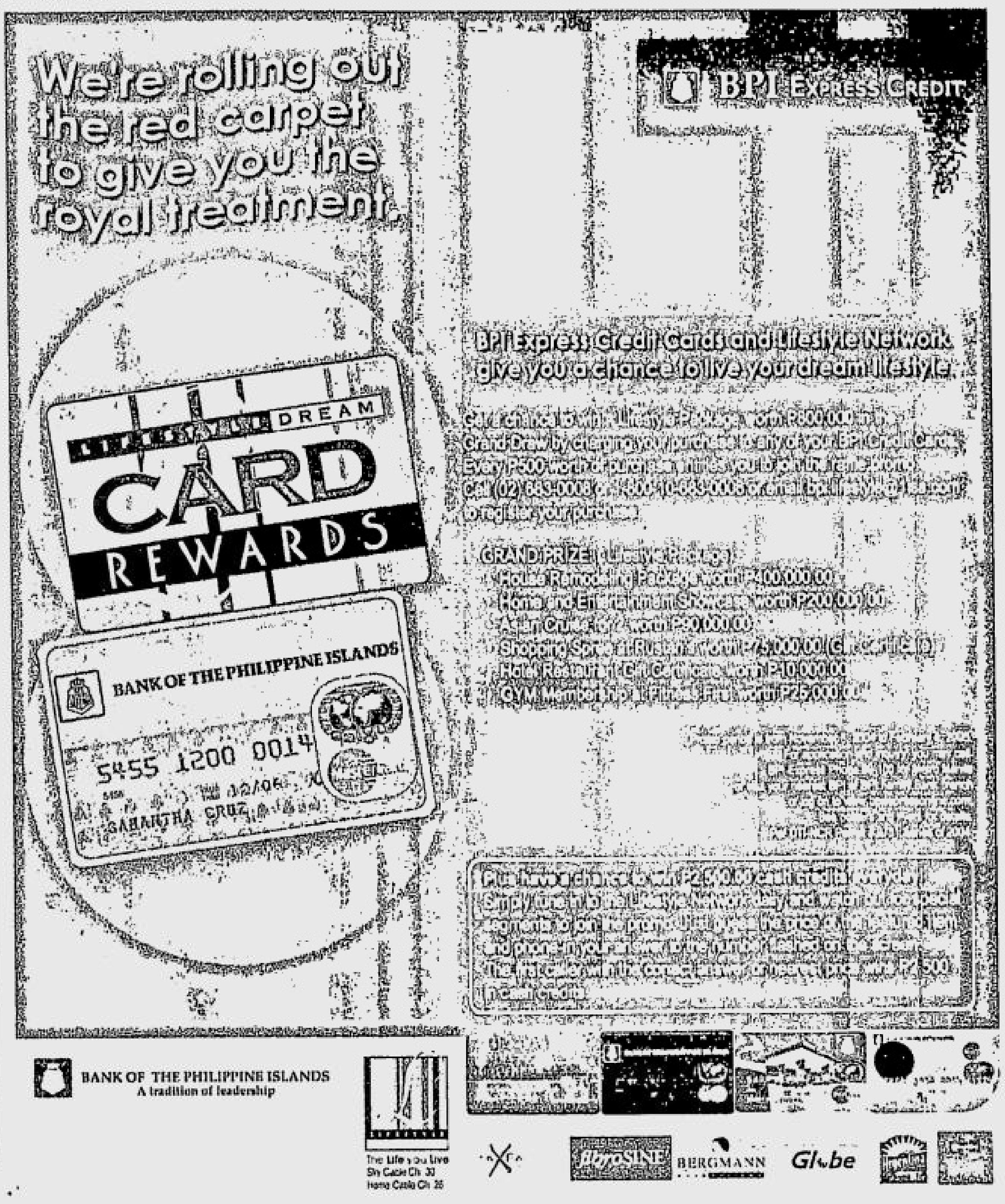
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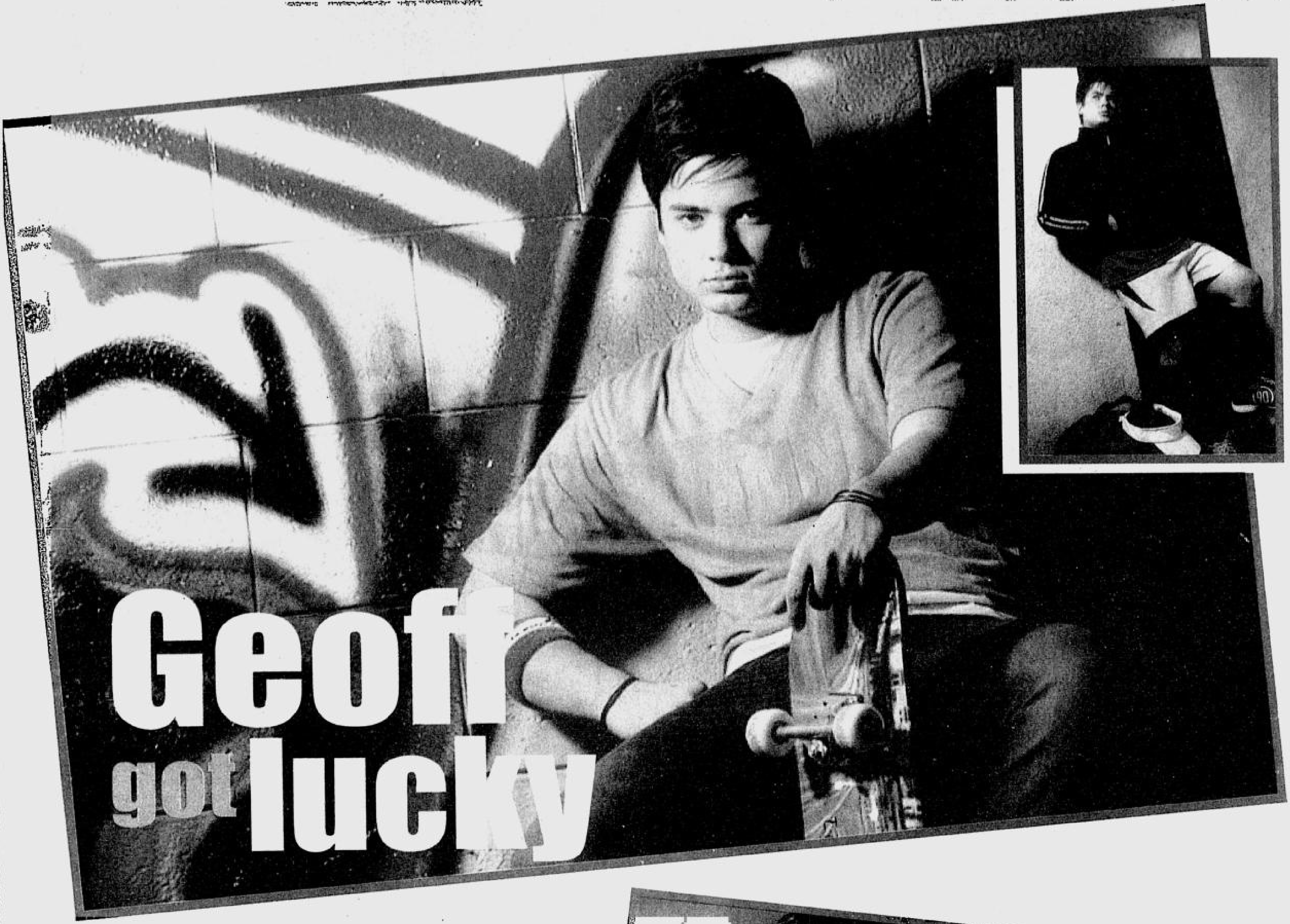


Geoff got lucky

By Tim Yap
Photos by Mark Nicdao

AT FIRST, Geoff Eigenmann didn't know how to deal with his newfound fame.

As the star of *"Hiram,"* music channel MYX's latest addition to its VJ platter, and one of the mainstays of ASAP Fanatic, Geoff is now in the center of the showbiz "it boy" spotlight. And this is just the beginning.

After being noticed as the lead in a telecom commercial, he has soared on the big screen, starring in a movie opposite Heart Evangelista, plus a string of commercials soon to hit your TV screen faster than you can say Eigenmann.

Last week saw the launch of his Human campaign, where he dons sassy sportswear for the Super! generation. Who better to don play apparel than the guy who can make hormones go on overdrive?

Geoff's appeal stems from, quite simply, being a simple guy. In fact, his being on the chubby side even endears him to more people. "But I'm trying to lose more weight—I'm on the South Beach Diet," he admits.

Before being entrenched within the show biz jungle, Geoff was the kind of guy who would rather stay home during weekends and play frisbee with his close buddies.

These days, however, he can't go out without being adulated. "Now he gets special treatment, freebies in restaurants," said an insider.

But he always remembers what his mom Gina (he is the second of three kids of respected actors Gina Alajar and Michael De Mesa) tells him. "Always keep your feet on the ground. Everything is passing—*wag magpapalaki ng ulo.*"

"This is all happening too fast, so I would want to take it slow," the new Human endorser confides to this writer.

Industry insiders say he is being groomed as the next big matinee idol. One look at his photos and you'll spot an uncanny resemblance to the guy who loves Chickenjoy.

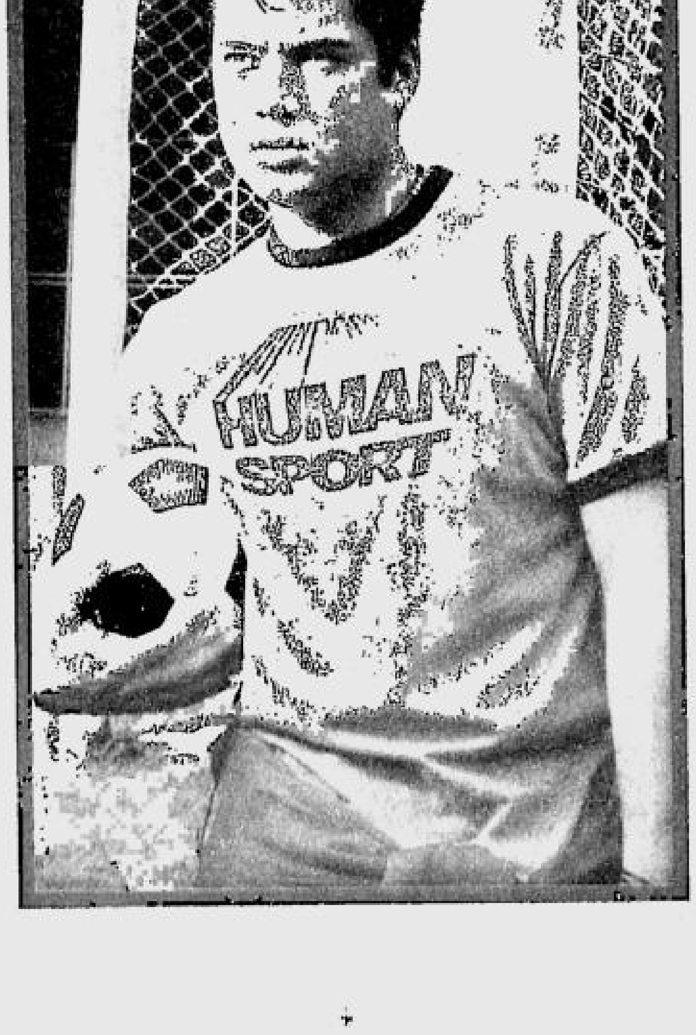
Outside his glitz biz persona, Geoff is a frustrated rock star who looks up to Incubus. If he were given the chance to do his own show, he would opt to do something a la Johnny Knoxville in Jackass, or Ashton Kutcher's Punk'd.

Stylewise, he is your normal jeans and sneakers kind of guy, with one great quirk—he is a hat freak. He owns a million and one hats—a pink hat and rose tinted shades being his favorite accessories.

In fact, this matinee idol in training is partial to the color pink. His whole room is colored pink. He loves all shades of pink, from salmon to fuchsia.

And he even once dyed his hair orange. Now isn't that so refreshing? A soon-to-be pin up boy of this generation that defies cookie cutter logic, unafraid to be himself, and devoid of the airs that typify newbies who get shoved in the limelight.

Here, Geoff gets to "move it" and finds some time out of his 24 hour taping schedule to log in our Super! Human guestbook.



The thing about fame is that you have to take it as and grab the opportunity presented to you because it may not come again and it might not last, so make the best of it.

The thing I love most about what I do is making the fans happy.

People might be surprised to know that I can eat crabs without using my hands but with a spoon and fork!

The most important thing I've ever learned is that life will always be full of challenges that are put there by the Lord to make you a better person and that you do have to live each day to the fullest and not hold back.

I wish when I started off I've been told to get as much sleep as I can.

The worst thing that ever happened to me was when my parent's separated.

And what this taught me was to cherish the moments I have with my family and the special people in my life, and to love them unconditionally.

The secret to happiness is to find happiness within yourself first then learn how to share it with others and to find joy in the simplest things that life can offer.

My best ever outfit consisted of a pink shirt and pink sun glasses.

My Super! Saturday night consists of staying at home and watching DVD's or playing Playstation, I'm pretty laid back.

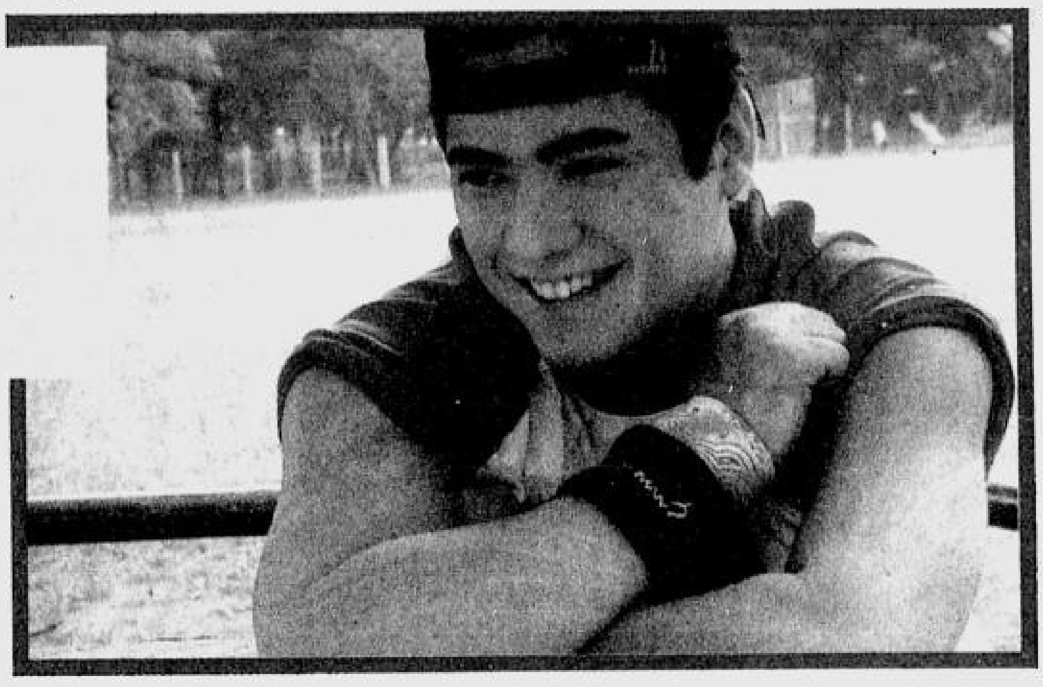
The soundtrack to my life would include songs by Incubus.

If I were invisible for a day I would walk around peacefully.

The thing that makes me most angry is when people lie.

If I were the most powerful person on earth I would end all wars.

The best thing about family is that whether you're up or down, they will always accept you. They will always be there for you to run to when all hell breaks lose and you don't know what to do.



This soon-to-be pin up boy of this generation defies cookie cutter logic and is unafraid to be himself

When I'm gone, they'll probably say that I was someone who always put his family first.

If money were no option I would donate a million pesos a month to charities, buy each member of my family a house and take them for a monthlong trip around Europe.

When I retire, I would want to live anywhere near the beach with my family.

The world would be a much better place if everyone in the world would find a common ground where there will be no more wars and there would be no more prejudice amongst people and fear will no longer exist.

My hero is Superman!

The thing that makes my life worth living is my family and friends.

My greatest hope for the future is that I be successful in everything that I wish to do.

The worst thing somebody said about me was that *mayabang daw ako*.

My favorite moments are when I get time alone with family and friends and when I play Ultimate Frisbee.

My most embarrassing moment was when I tried doing a back flip to impress a girl, but instead I ended up slipping and landed flat on my back.

I'm saving up for my future where I can have my own house and provide for my future family.

My biggest indulgence is food.

My current state of mind is overwhelmed.

If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Colin Farrel.

My 5 favorite words are: dude, heaps, I reckon, even still, same difference.

I aspire to be the best in everything that I wish to do and accomplish in life, whether it be in acting or anything else.

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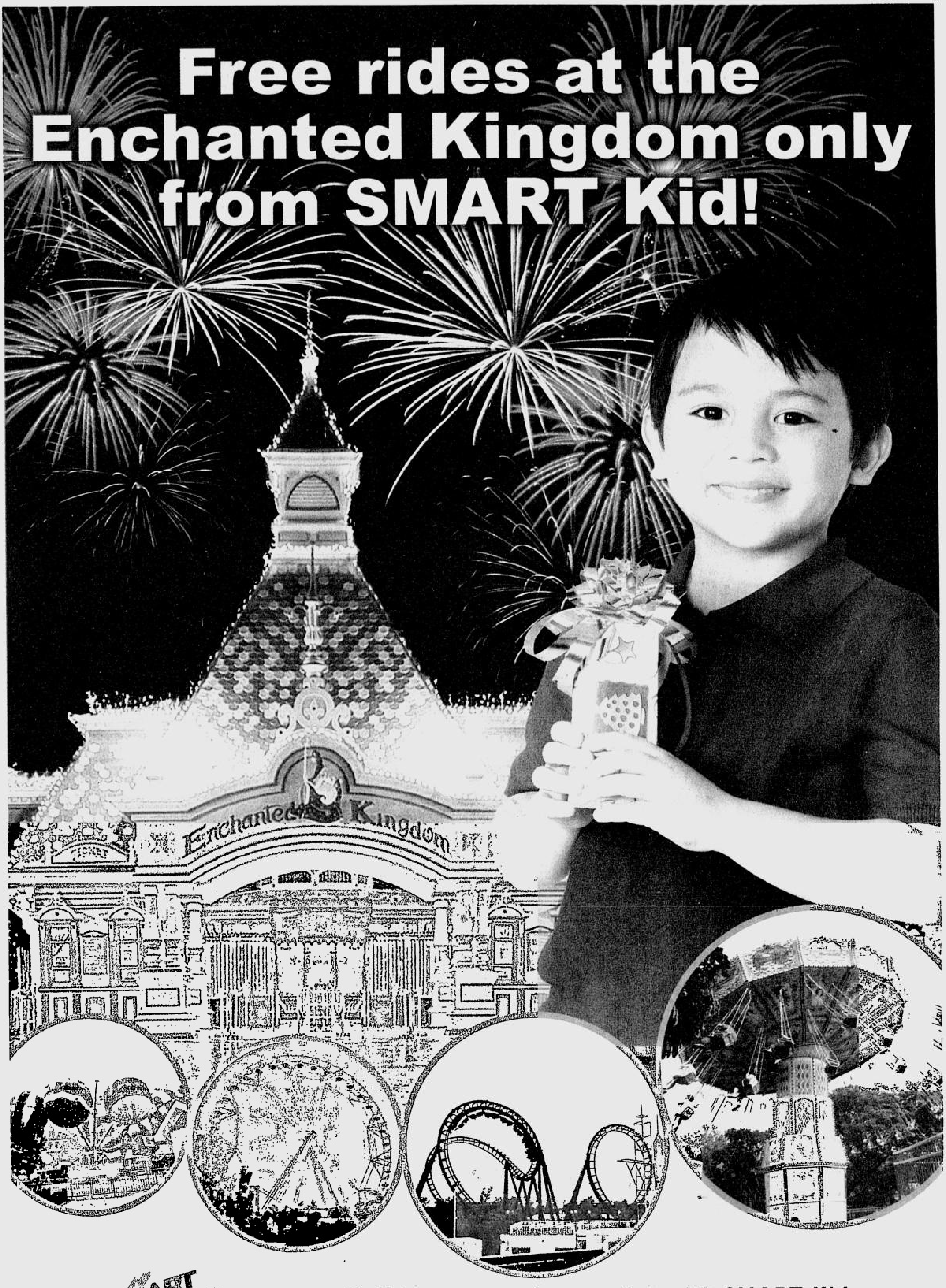
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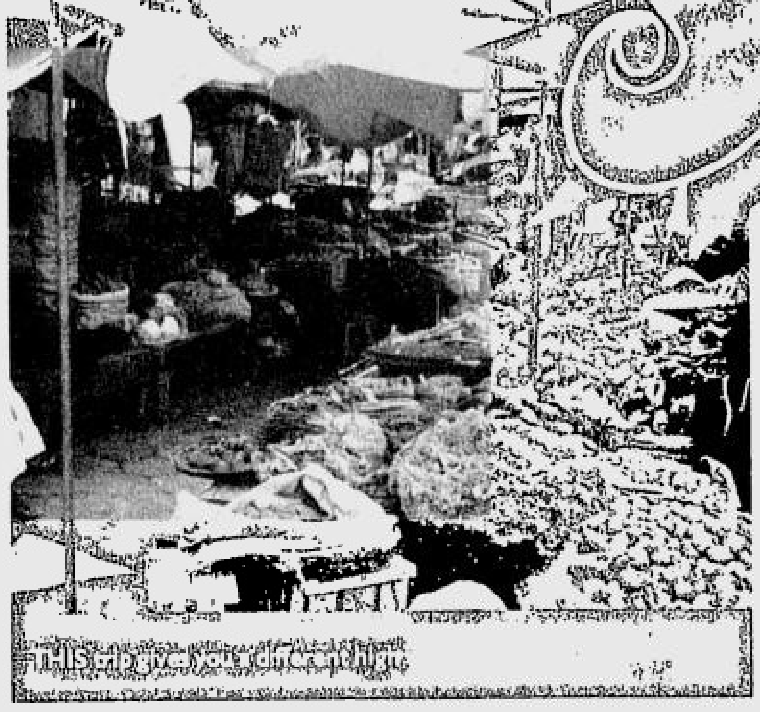

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OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

JIMI Hendrix, Hunter Thompson, Lewis Carroll, Aldous Huxley. Time and space permitting, I would have loved to take them, fully sober, to a place called Divisoria, and see how they would fare on the hallucinogenic trip.

Through the looking glass and down the rabbit hole indeed, Divisoria is a sensory adventure.There is no place quite like it. The distinct scent that wafts through its streets and inner labyrinths reminds me of a mix of squashed bananas, rainwater and day-old cat food. It is a haphazard mosaic of fantasy overlapping

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Experience the
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new light

Carols of the World
Every Saturday and Sunday
starting Nov. 13 - Dec. 19
Feel the spirit of Christmas
as guest chorales serenade you
with angelic voices
and songs of the season.

Out of the Page
Every Saturday starting
Nov. 13 - Dec. 18
See the latest trends as the
fashion statements of the
metro's top magazines
come alive in Rustan's.

Rustan's Wish Tree
Nov. 13 - Dec. 19
Share your blessings
and make a difference
this Christmas for the kids in
CRIBS, GINTO Foundation and
ARIC. Grant a wish in Rustan's
and receive a special
Mandala-inspired
Christmas ornament.

Santa's Corner
Every Saturday and Sunday
starting Nov. 13 - Dec. 19
Naughty or nice, meet and
greet Santa at the children's
Floor of Rustan's Makati and
wish for that Christmas gift you
have long been dreaming of.

Celebration of Grace
Simbang Gabi at Rustan's
Amidst the holiday festivities,
remember the essence of
Christmas and join the
Novena Masses at 6pm
starting Dec. 15-23 at the
Home Floor of Rustan's Makati.

Visit Rustan's and discover the
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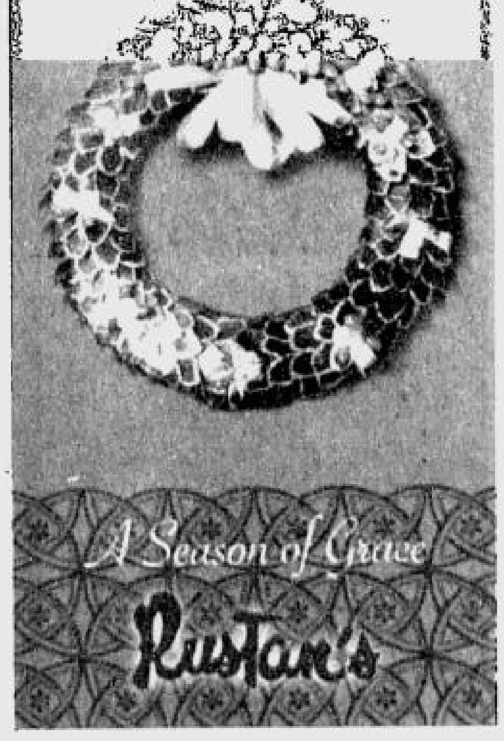

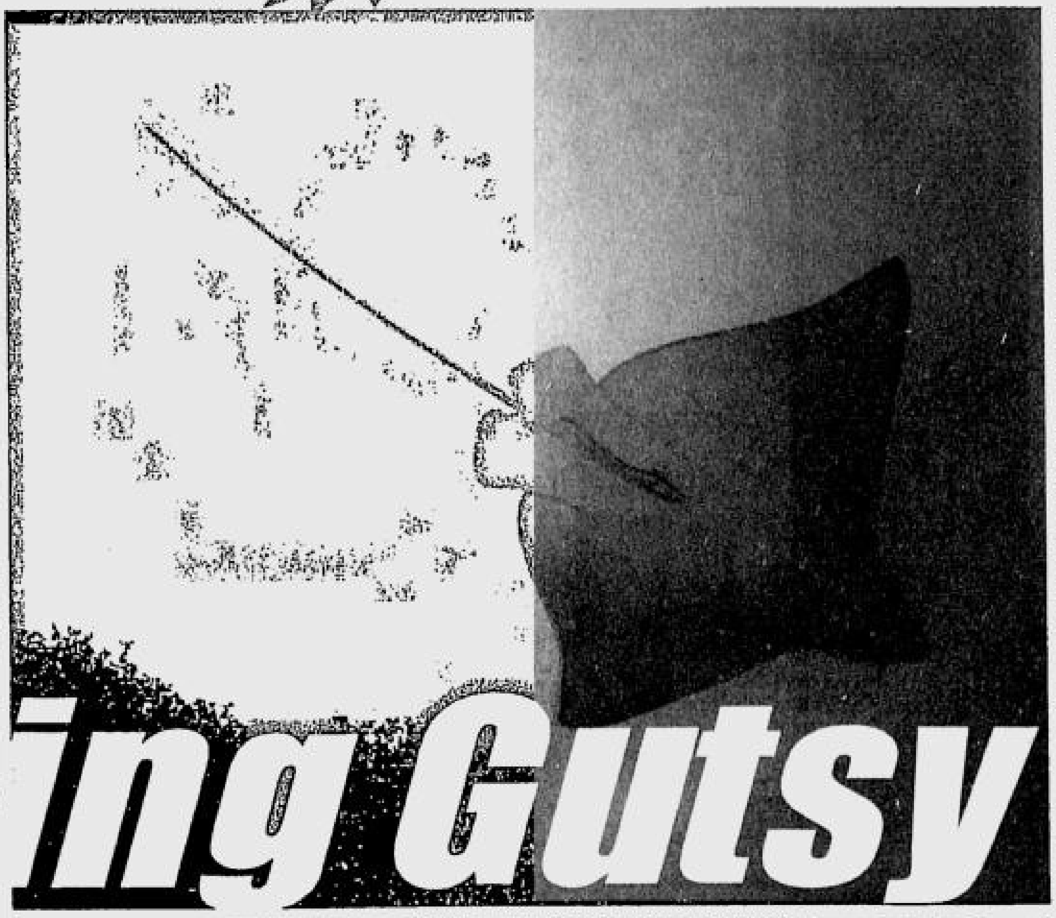

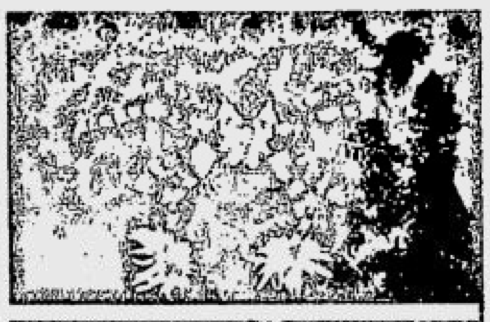

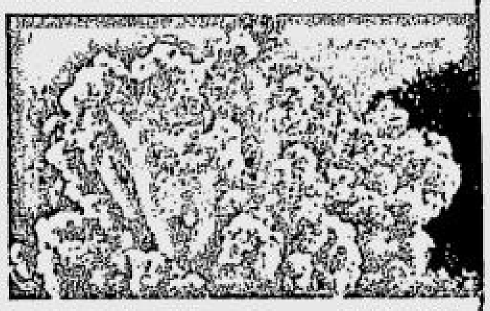

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By Tim Yap
Photos by Gutsy Tuason

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The most important thing I've ever learned is that life is short.

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If money was no option I would buy a boat and dive the world.

The world would be a much better place if there were less people in it.

My hero is Jane Goodall.

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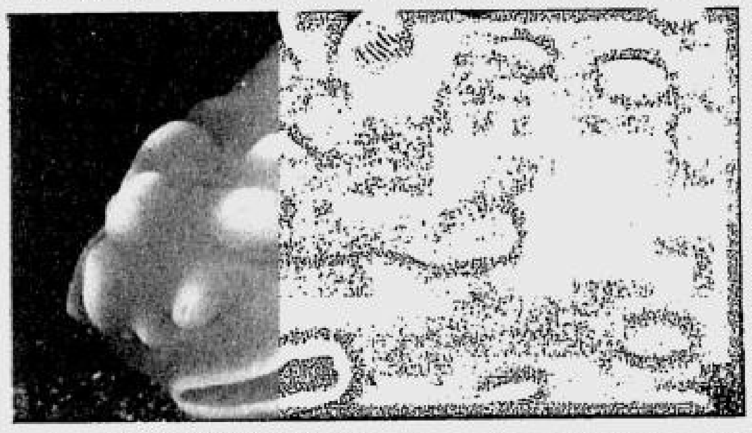

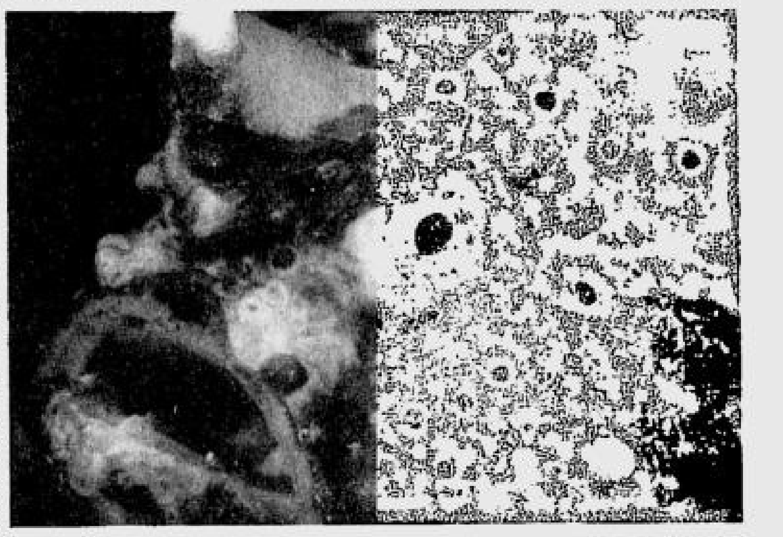

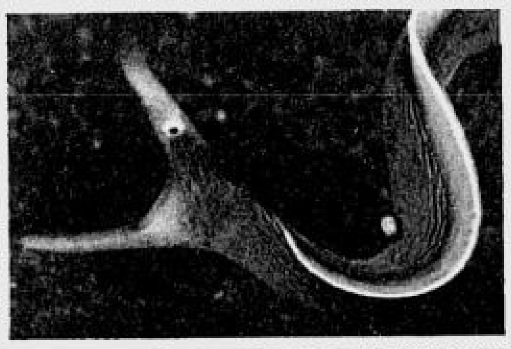

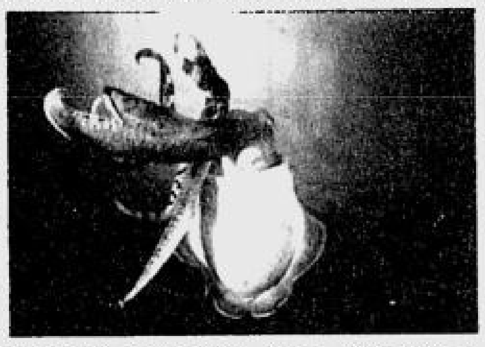

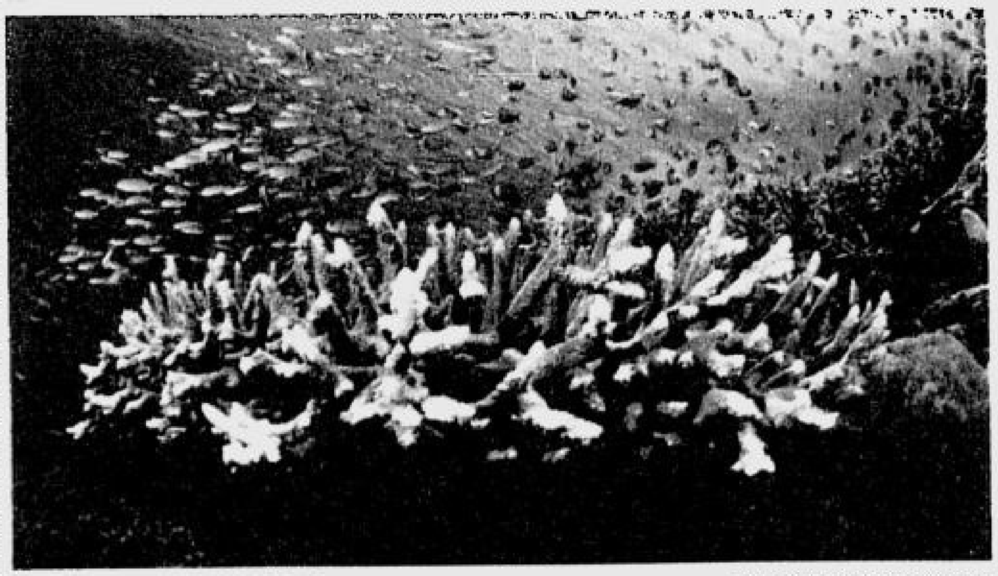

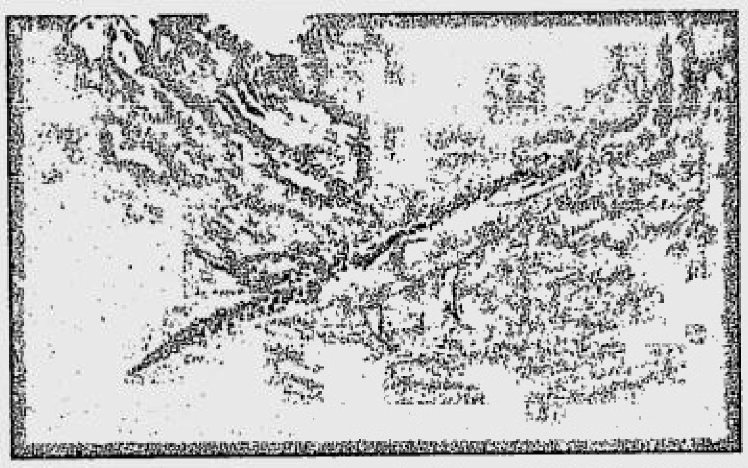

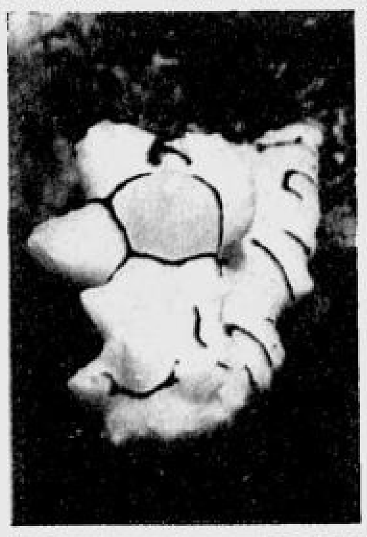

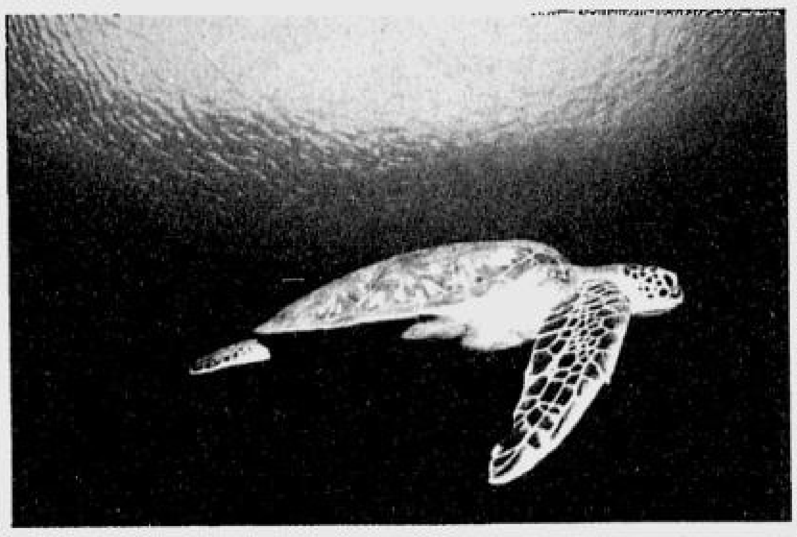

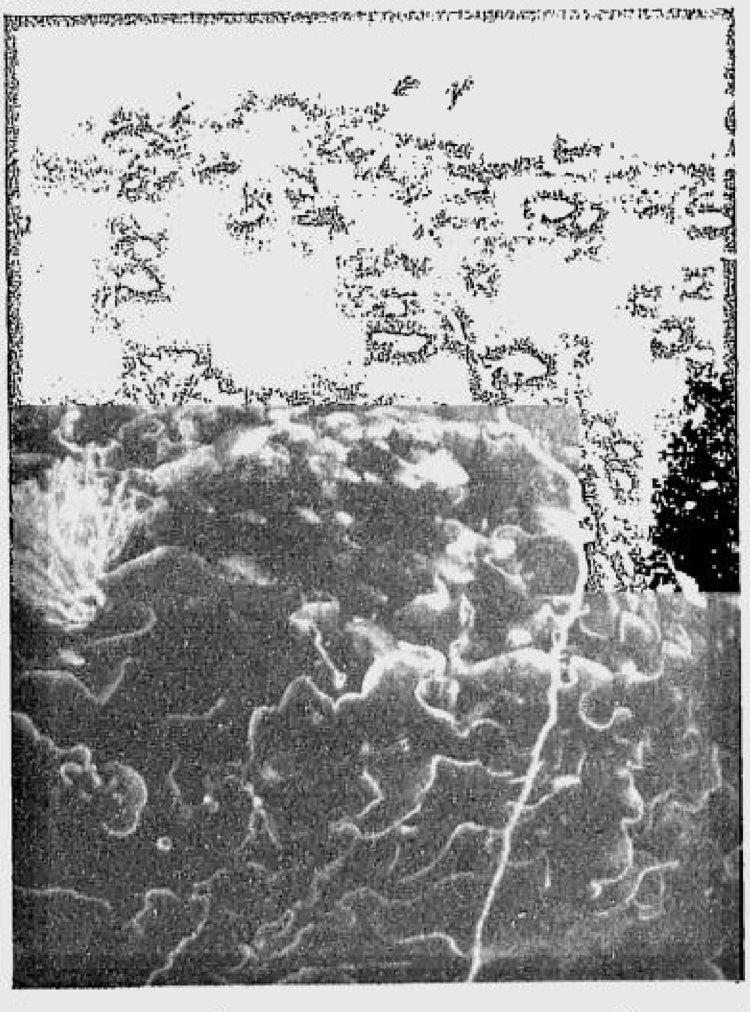

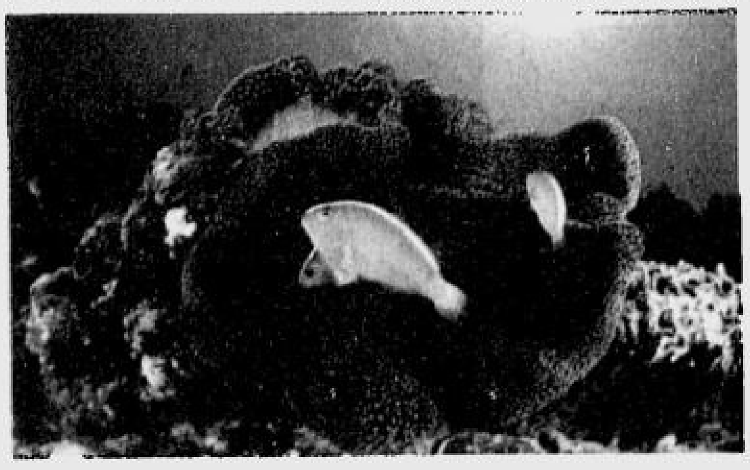

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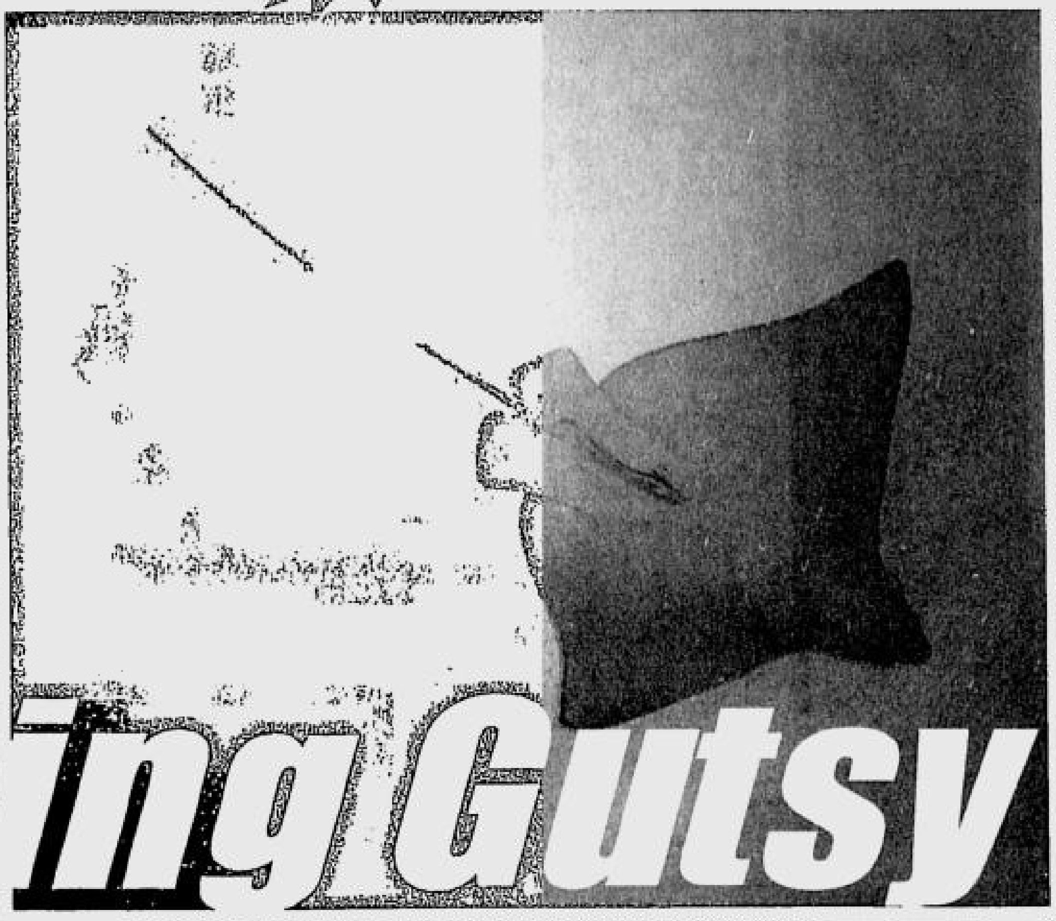

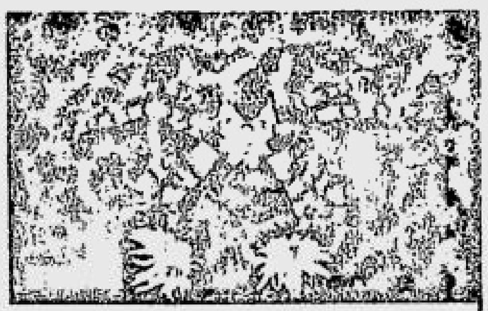

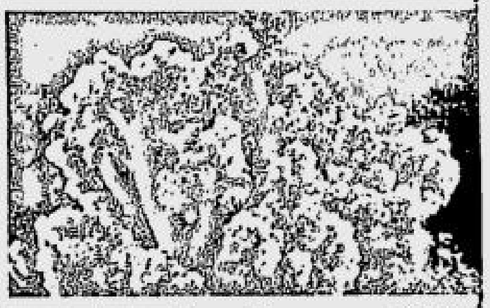

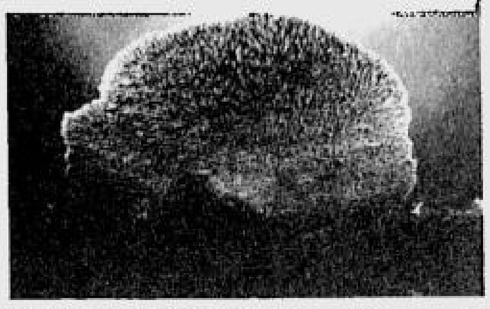

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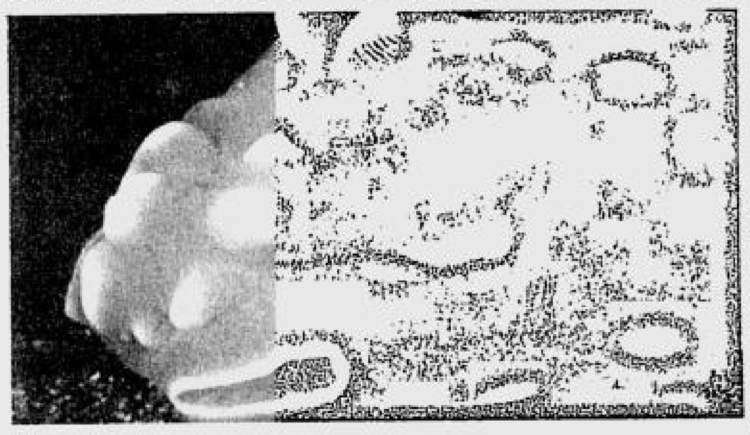

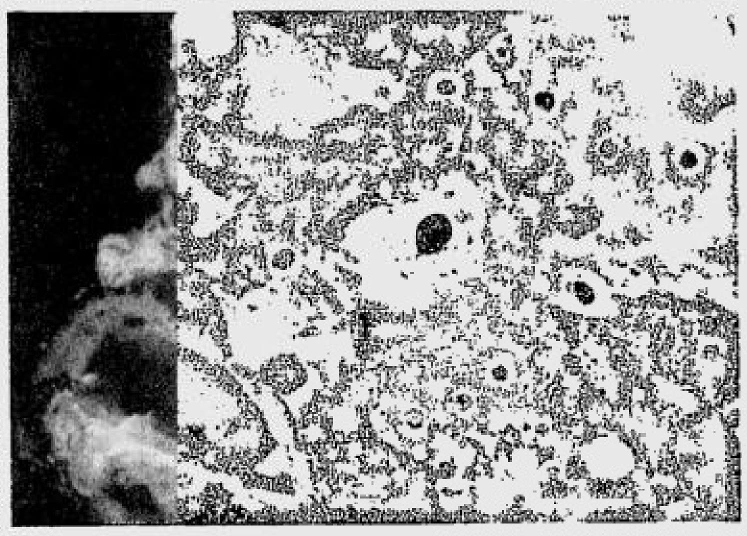

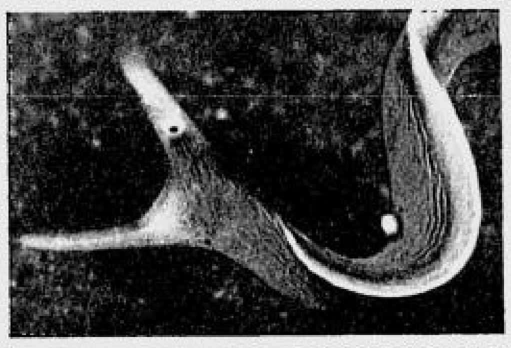

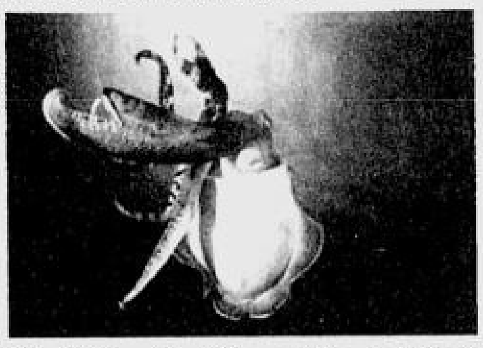

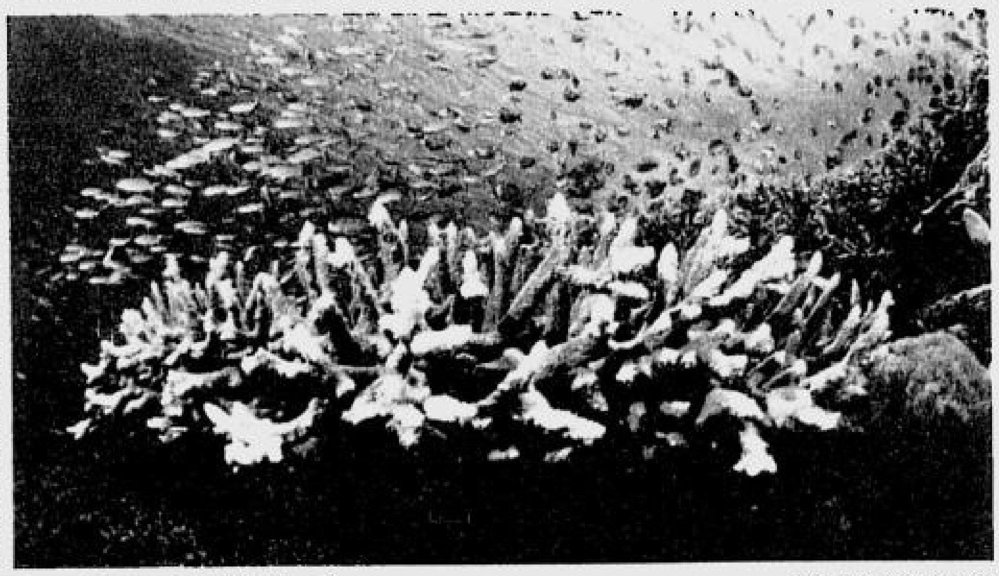

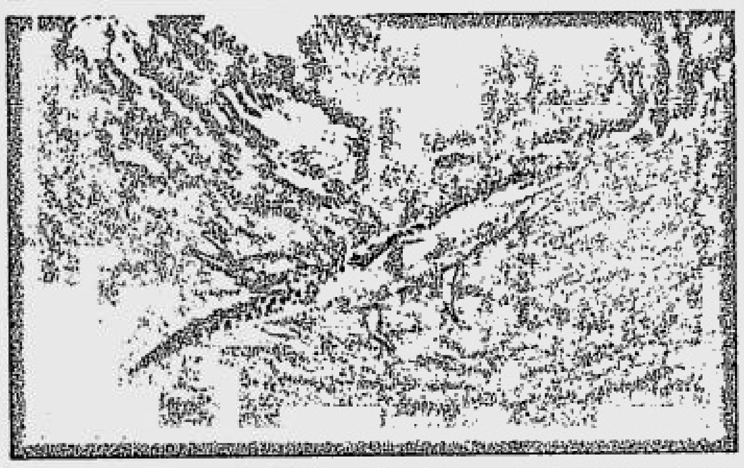

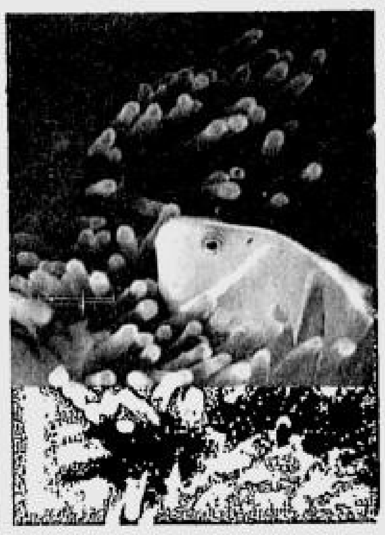

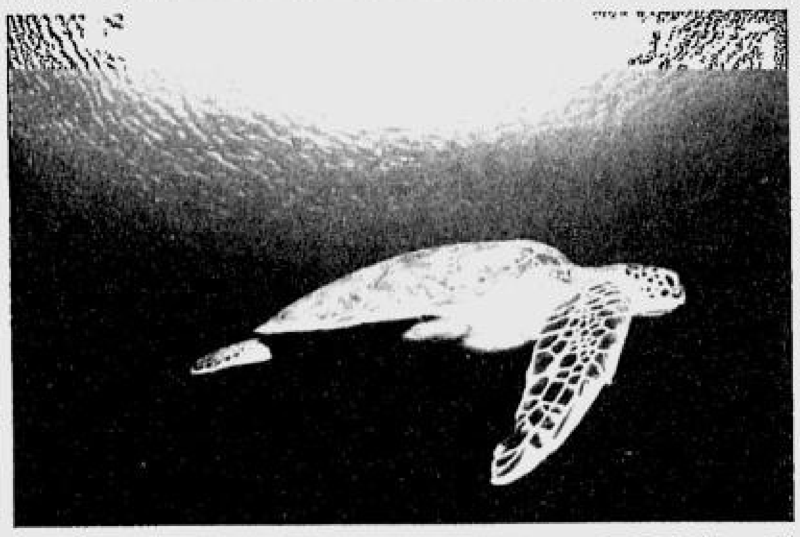

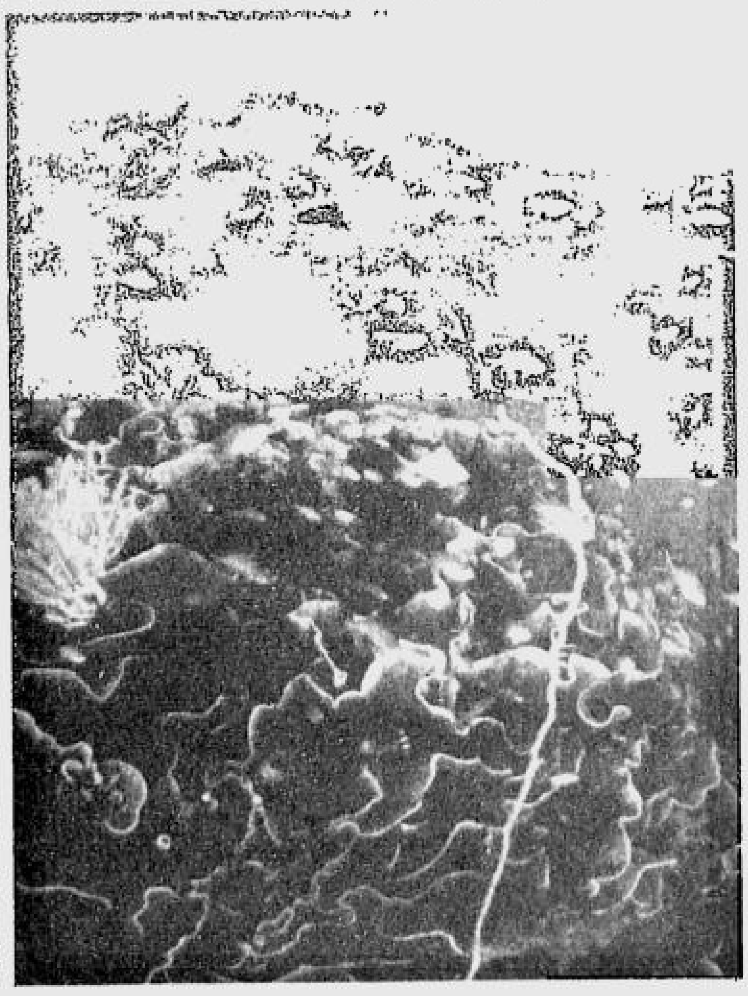

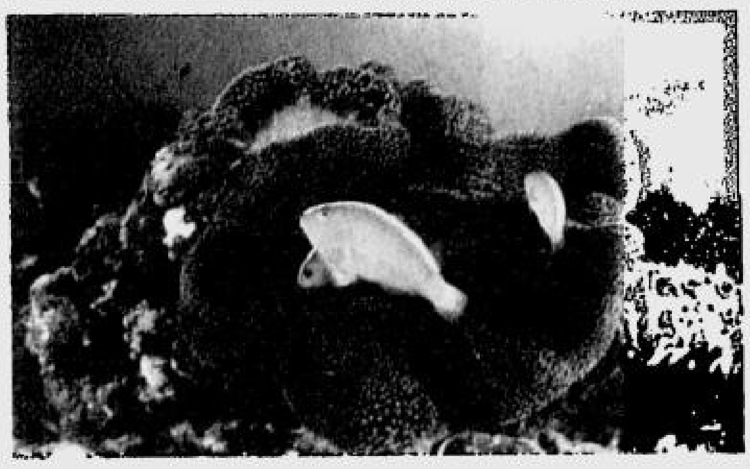

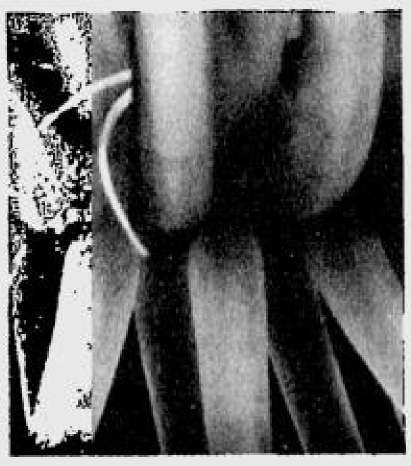

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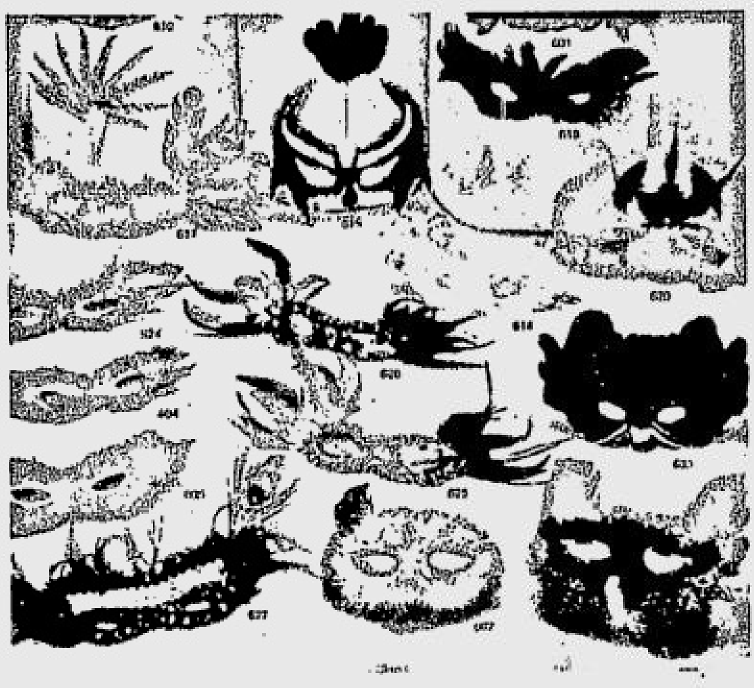


Divi Nation

From page G1

with concrete realities.

What else could it be, with butterfly wings, flower garlands, Carnaval costumes and Venetian-style masks sold alongside overflowing fruit baskets, cheap Spongebob Squarepants panties and pirated DVDs?

Divisoria is a megalopolis of stuff, a neighborhood in Dali's and Seurat's world, a kaleidoscope of beads, sequins, metal hooks, feathers, glitters and buttons, rows after rows of *tela* in every shade imaginable.

Many times, it challenges logic. I once saw a bright red bandana with the familiar, ubiquitous profile of Che Guevara, and under it, instead of the famous battlecry, "*Hasta la Victoria Siempre*," was printed the less publicized fiery words, "Rage Against the Machine." It is a moving scene peopled with characters in a theater of the absurd: skinny sweat-soaked men riding bicycles stacked with wire cages, fishball vendors steaming their faces at the height of the noonday sun, and children rapping in Tagalog on the open streets.

Divisoria is an experience, a feeling. Why, just the other day, my friend got hit square on the face with a *rambutan*. Truly, there is no place quite like it.

Megalopolis of stuff

I had even once concluded that the cure for cancer is somewhere in this megalopolis of stuff, one just needed to look hard for it. In the past years, I have come back to this market of the surreal time and again, always in search of some strange thing and always lucky enough to find it.

On Halloweens, instead of going to a costume store, I would come to Divi with only my imagination and a few hundred pesos in my pocket, and find that my fantasies of Snow Queens and Gaiman's Endless come to life. Every Christmas, needing such mundane yet necessary details as authentic-looking berries and *sinamay* strips, all I needed was some time off to walk down its streets and collect them in bulk.

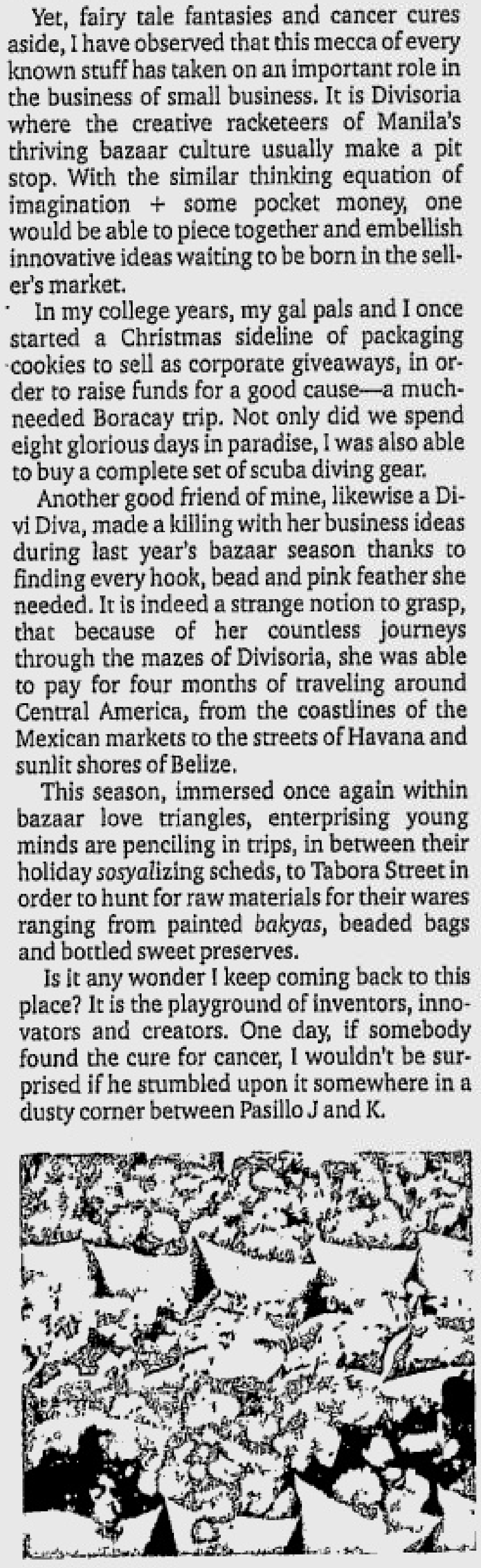
Yet, fairy tale fantasies and cancer cures aside, I have observed that this mecca of every known stuff has taken on an important role in the business of small business. It is Divisoria where the creative racketeers of Manila's thriving bazaar culture usually make a pit stop. With the similar thinking equation of imagination + some pocket money, one would be able to piece together and embellish innovative ideas waiting to be born in the seller's market.

In my college years, my gal pals and I once started a Christmas sideline of packaging cookies to sell as corporate giveaways, in order to raise funds for a good cause—a much-needed Boracay trip. Not only did we spend eight glorious days in paradise, I was also able to buy a complete set of scuba diving gear.

Another good friend of mine, likewise a Divi Diva, made a killing with her business ideas during last year's bazaar season thanks to finding every hook, bead and pink feather she needed. It is indeed a strange notion to grasp, that because of her countless journeys through the mazes of Divisoria, she was able to pay for four months of traveling around Central America, from the coastlines of the Mexican markets to the streets of Havana and sunlit shores of Belize.

This season, immersed once again within bazaar love triangles, enterprising young minds are penciling in trips, in between their holiday *sosyalizing* scheds, to Tabora Street in order to hunt for raw materials for their wares ranging from painted *bakyas*, beaded bags and bottled sweet preserves.

Is it any wonder I keep coming back to this place? It is the playground of inventors, innovators and creators. One day, if somebody found the cure for cancer, I wouldn't be surprised if he stumbled upon it somewhere in a dusty corner between Pasillo J and K.



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A Brand-new Season
From the styles of Valentino Roma to the luxury of Cartier and Lalique's fine home decor, Rustan's gives you the world. Watch out for the newest collections from Zimmerman, Rustan's Black Label, Baby Doll and Seafolly.

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Rustan's Shangri-La Plaza
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Rustan's Cebu
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A Season of Grace
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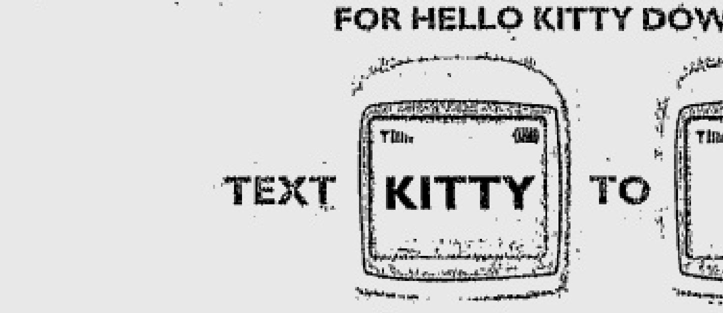
See flyers for details. Promo duration: Dec. 10 - 31, 2004 Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6032, Series of 2004.



SMART Kid Prepaid gives you a chance to win a McDonald's Birthday Party Package worth ₱5,000!

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style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

The Bipolar Express

HI. I'M Tom Hanks! Welcome to MY movie!

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

All things considered, I believe the simplest and most dead-on way to ring in the season is by watching a great holiday film. Though I consider cartoon classics like "A Charlie Brown Christmas," Dr. Seuss' "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas," and the 1964 stop-motion milestone "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" as Dec. 25-morning must-sees, I've also cultivated an appreciation for slightly gloomier Christmas-themed features. Over the years, I've been convinced it's because of Tim Burton and his macabre version of the gift-giving chub in the red suit. My perception of Santa Claus—who, by the way, still sits on top of my religious totem pole—took on a new, Marilyn Manson-like quality after I saw "The Nightmare Before Christmas" as a kid.

After checking the past week's movie offerings, I wholeheartedly brushed off "Christmas with the Kranks" (since it seems Tim Allen churns out such movies on a yearly basis anyway) and "Alexander" (since I thought the epic was simply a big-budgeted bad idea. Don't you think Colin Farrell sort of looks like a gay Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter?). So, relying on the good karma of "The Incredibles"—my last fist-pumping box office excursion—I homed in on "The Polar Express" and hoped to chance upon another hands-down future classic. Instead, what I saw was a modern-day tragedy fronted by Tom "Omnipresent Henceforth" Hanks. Cue a solemnly robotic Josh Groban ballad, please.

Have yourself a scary little Christmas

Directed by Robert Zemeckis and co-written with William Broyles Jr., "The Polar Express" was based on a 32-page children's book by Chris Van Allsburg. Now, I expected a little clever deviance from Zemeckis ("Who Framed Roger Rabbit?") and that came in the form of obscenely expensive human motion-capture technology used to bring the book to life. Or non-life, in this case. On the one hand, the bleak, hangdog atmosphere was a given since the film was based on Van Allsburg's illustrations. Then again, it probably would've been better if the production team had stuck with traditional animation to render the human characters.

Each of the movie's key players, especially Tom Hanks' six—you heard that right!—incarnations, had no soul in their eyes and looked like waxy "Dawn of the Dead"-style mannequins. (To borrow the tagline from "The Nightmare Before Christmas," was this Halloween? Or is it Christmas?) To me it seemed it was more important for the Hero Girl's golden ticket to dance like the plastic bag from "American Beauty," for example, than the protagonists' facial expressions *not* to appear embalmed. And that's a big minus, considering this was supposed to be a movie about the power of faith and imagination during the happiest time of the year.

Likewise, "The Polar Express" oddly resembled a Coca-Cola holiday advertisement. Again, maybe it was due to the

THE BIPOLAR/ H4

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For Someone
Who Has
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What do you give to people on top? To people who know how to appreciate the finer things in life?

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They offer a wide range of the world's finest Organic Wines. Made by some of the finest wine boutiques in the world, these handcrafted organic wines come from the great wine producing countries: France, Italy, Spain, Chile, Argentina and South Africa. They are made from 100% certified organic grapes – grapes grown using only organic fertilizers, homeopathic sprays and natural preparations. Even the wine-making process is natural and vegan. Only natural substances are used to clarify the wine unlike conventional wines that use egg whites or milk and fish proteins in the bottling process. Every sip is a sip of satisfaction - knowing that the wine you get is distinctly complex and of the highest quality.

Healthy Options also offers gift packs with premium, pure, natural and organic health food items and personal care products.

Organic Harvest gift box. It's a package of pure, natural, organic food and drinks that gives Christmas dinners a healthy twist.

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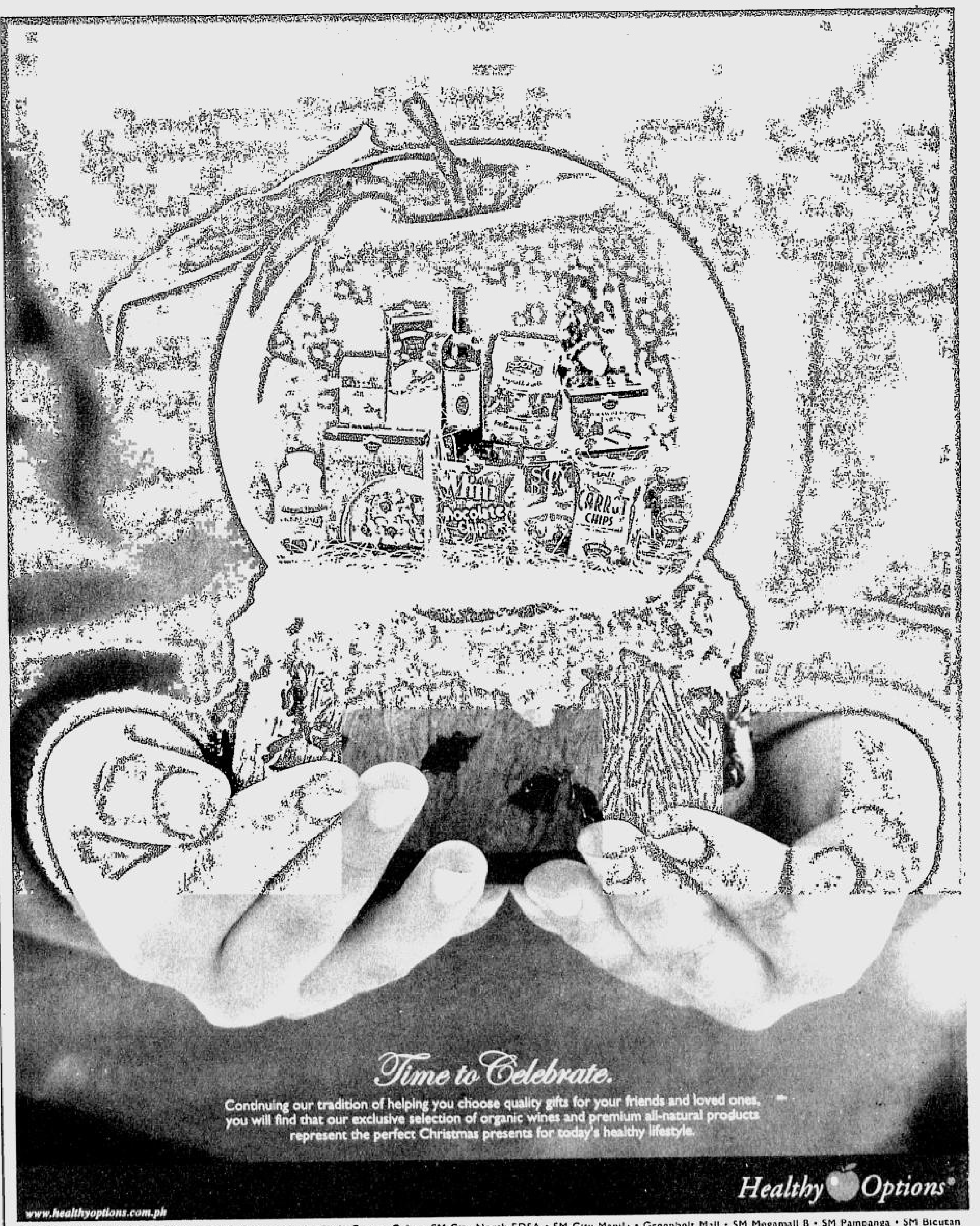
Create Your Own Gift Packs. Check out any *Healthy Options* store and create your own gift packs to suit your budget. Select from a wide array of naturally formulated personal care products that nourish and heal the body; as well as snacks, drinks or meals for those who have special diets or simply for those who are just looking out for their health.

It's time to celebrate the season in good health with organic wine and more the perfect gifts for people who have everything.



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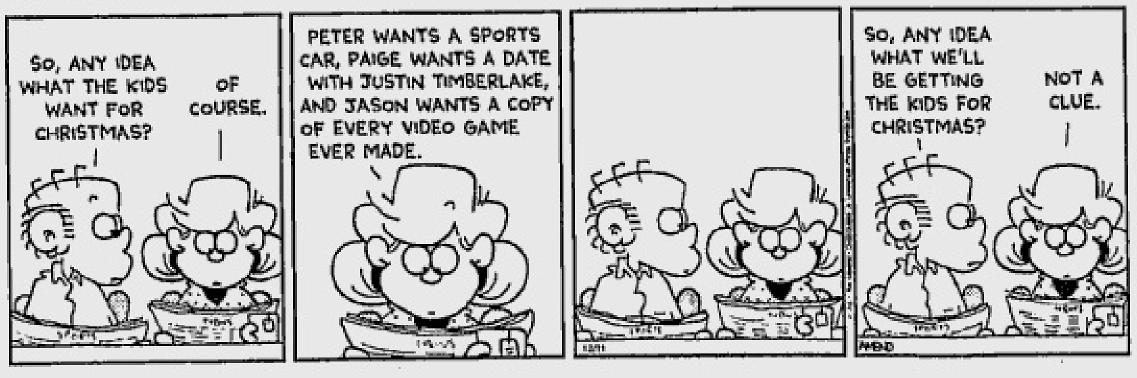
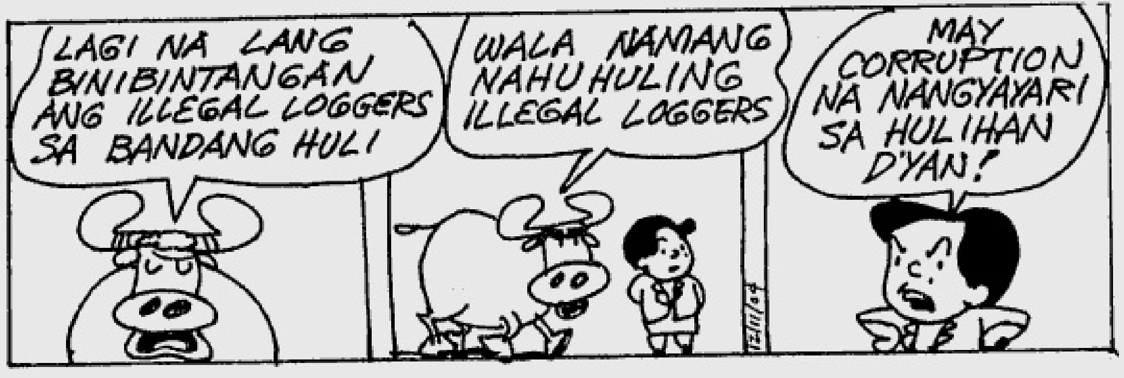
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


SO, ANY IDEA WHAT THE KIDS WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?
OF COURSE.
PETER WANTS A SPORTS CAR, PAIGE WANTS A DATE WITH JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, AND JASON WANTS A COPY OF EVERY VIDEO GAME EVER MADE.
SO, ANY IDEA WHAT WE'LL BE GETTING THE KIDS FOR CHRISTMAS?
NOT A CLUE.
AMEND

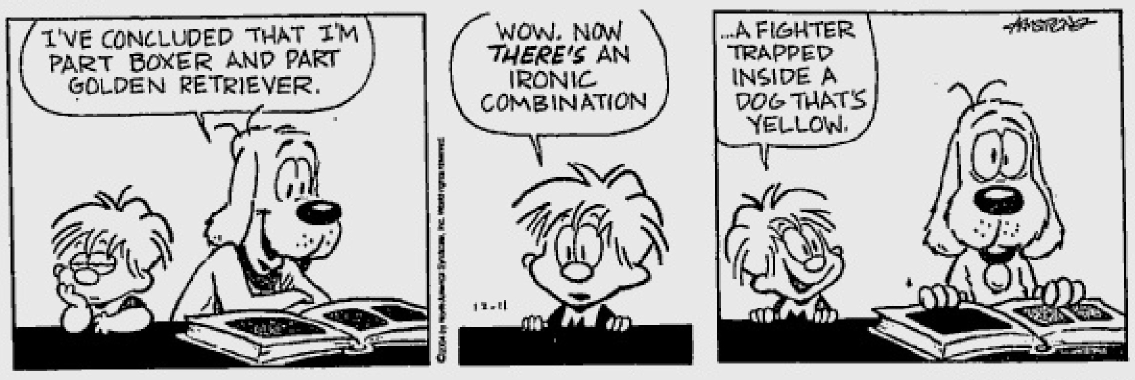
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


LAGI NA LANG BINIBINTANGAN ANG ILLEGAL LOGGERS SA BANDANG HULI
WALA NAMANG NAHUHULING ILLEGAL LOGGERS
MAY CORRUPTION NA NANGYAYARI SA HULIHAN D'YAN!
12/11/04

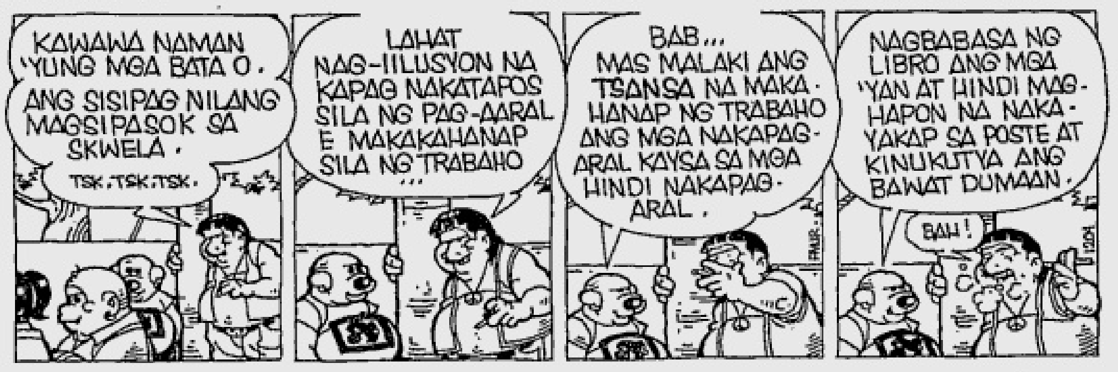
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'VE CONCLUDED THAT I'M PART BOXER AND PART GOLDEN RETRIEVER.
WOW. NOW THERE'S AN IRONIC COMBINATION
...A FIGHTER TRAPPED INSIDE A DOG THAT'S YELLOW.
ARMSTRONG
12-11

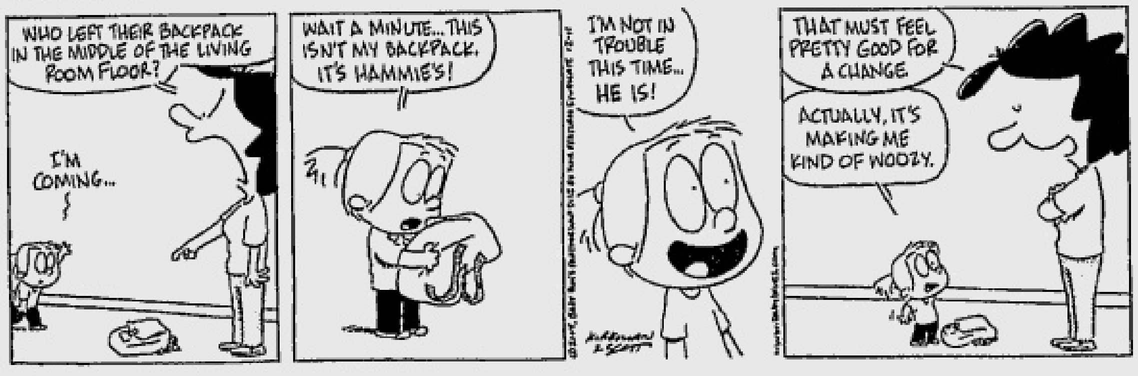
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KAWAWA NAMAN 'YUNG MGA BATA O. ANG SISIPAG NILANG MAGSIPASOK SA SKWELA.
TSK. TSK. TSK.
LAHAT NAG-IILUSYON NA KAPAG NAKATAPOS SILA NG PAG-AARAL E MAKAKAHANAP SILA NG TRABAHO ...
BAB... MAS MALAKI ANG TSANSA NA MAKAHANAP NG TRABAHO ANG MGA NAKAPAG-ARAL KAYSA SA MGA HINDI NAKAPAG-ARAL.
NAGBABASA NG LIBRO ANG MGA 'YAN AT HINDI MAGHAPON NA NAKAYAKAP SA POSTE AT KINUKUTYA ANG BAWAT DUMAAN.
BAH!
12/04

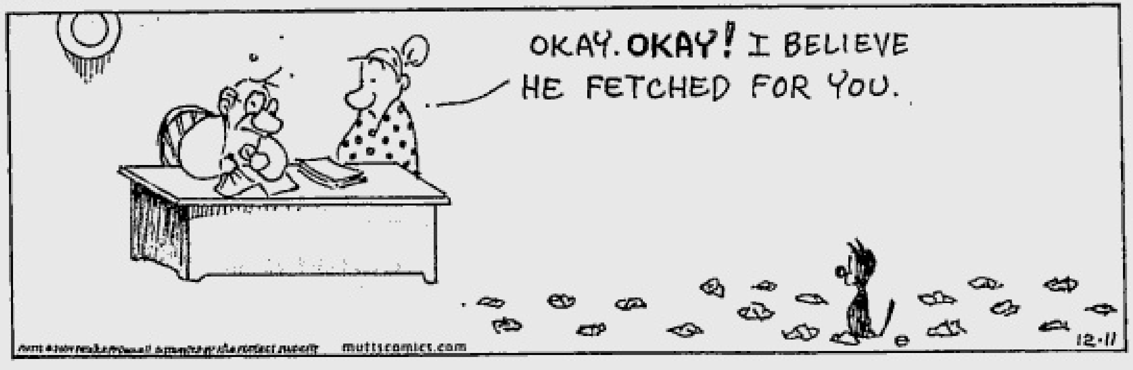
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHO LEFT THEIR BACKPACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR?
I'M COMING...
WAIT A MINUTE... THIS ISN'T MY BACKPACK. IT'S HAMMIE'S!
I'M NOT IN TROUBLE THIS TIME... HE IS!
THAT MUST FEEL PRETTY GOOD FOR A CHANGE.
ACTUALLY, IT'S MAKING ME KIND OF WOOZY.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

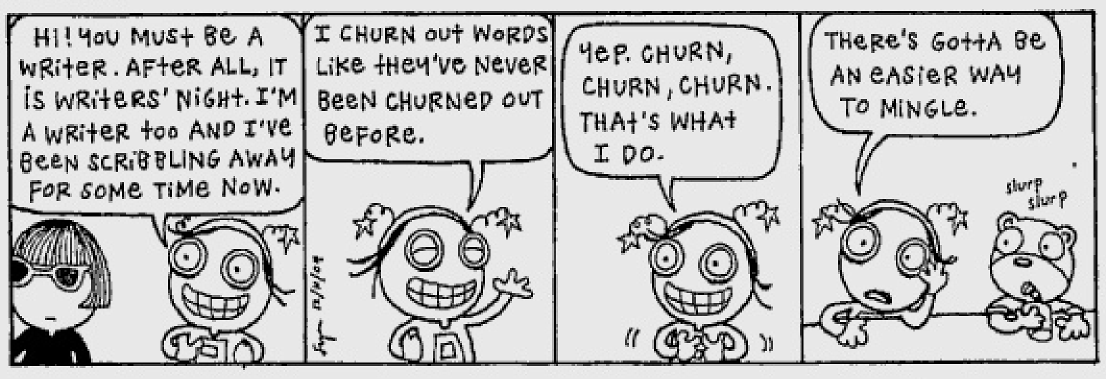
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OKAY. OKAY! I BELIEVE HE FETCHED FOR YOU.
muttscomics.com
12-11

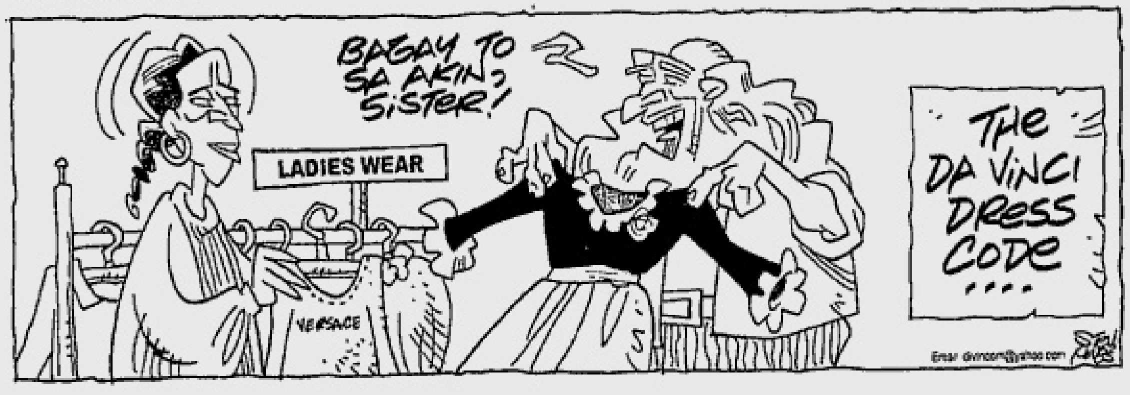
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hi! You Must Be A Writer. After All, It Is Writers' Night. I'm A Writer Too And I've Been Scribbling Away For Some Time Now.
I Churn Out Words Like They've Never Been Churned Out Before.
Yep. Churn, Churn, Churn. That's What I Do.
There's Gotta Be An Easier Way To Mingle.
slurp slurp

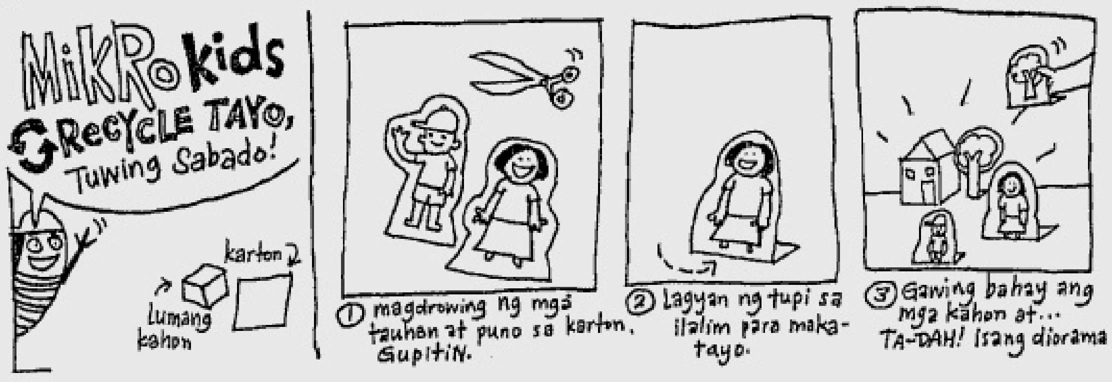
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BAGAY TO SA AKIN, SISTER?
LADIES WEAR
VERSACE
THE DA VINCI DRESS CODE ....

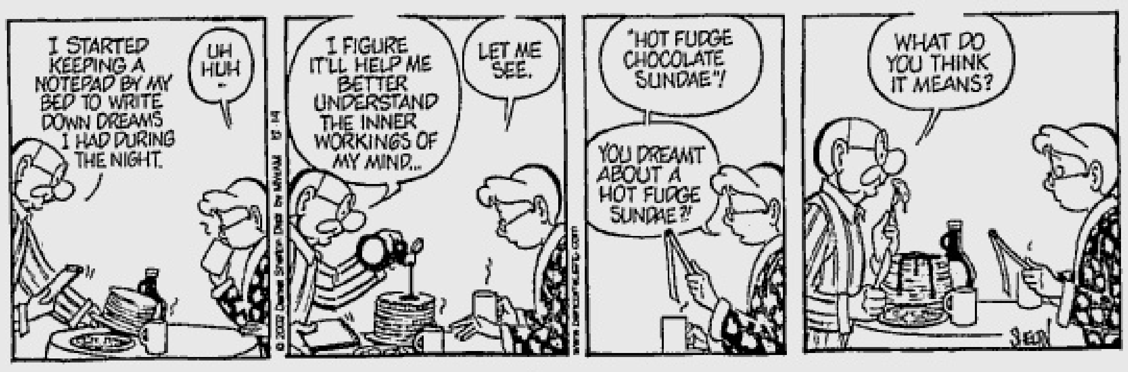
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo Kids
Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
lumang kahon
karton
① magdrowing ng mga tauhan at puno sa karton. Gupitin.
② Lagyan ng tupi sa ilalim para makatayo.
③ Gawing bahay ang mga kahon at... TA-DAH! Isang diorama

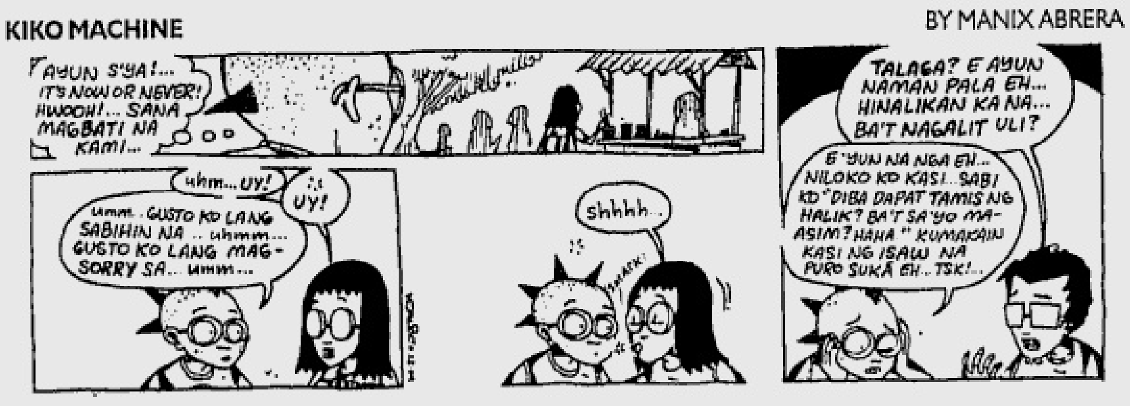
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I STARTED KEEPING A NOTEPAD BY MY BED TO WRITE DOWN DREAMS I HAD DURING THE NIGHT.
UH HUH
I FIGURE IT'LL HELP ME BETTER UNDERSTAND THE INNER WORKINGS OF MY MIND...
LET ME SEE.
"HOT FUDGE CHOCOLATE SUNDAE"!
YOU DREAMT ABOUT A HOT FUDGE SUNDAE?!
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS?
SHELTON

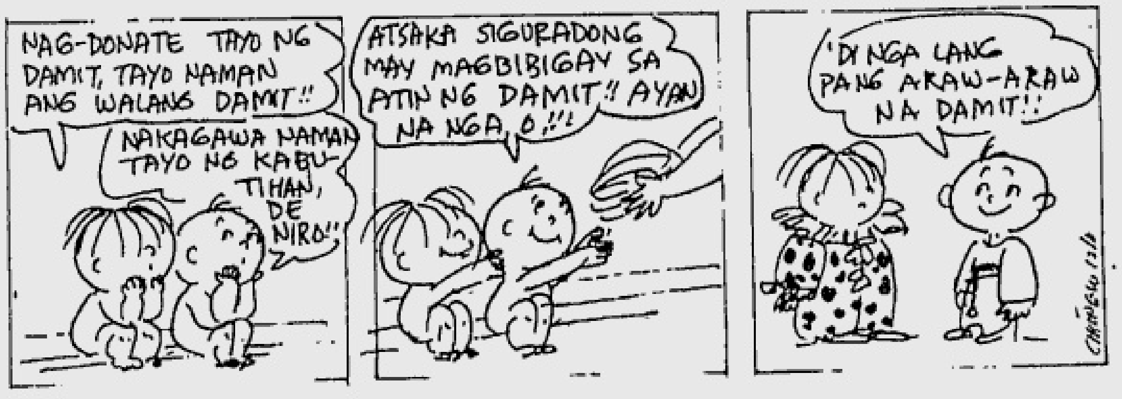
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AYUN S'YA!... IT'S NOW OR NEVER! HWOOH!... SANA MAGBATI NA KAMI...
uhm... UY!
UY!
umm... GUSTO KO LANG SABIHIN NA .. uhmm... GUSTO KO LANG MAG-SORRY SA... umm...
shhhh..
TALAGA? E AYUN NAMAN PALA EH... HINALIKAN KA NA... BA'T NAGALIT ULI?
E 'YUN NA NGA EH... NILOKO KO KASI... SABI KO "DIBA DAPAT TAMIS NG HALIK? BA'T SA'YO MA-ASIM? HAHA" KUMAKAIN KASI NG ISAW NA PURO SUKA EH.. TSK!..

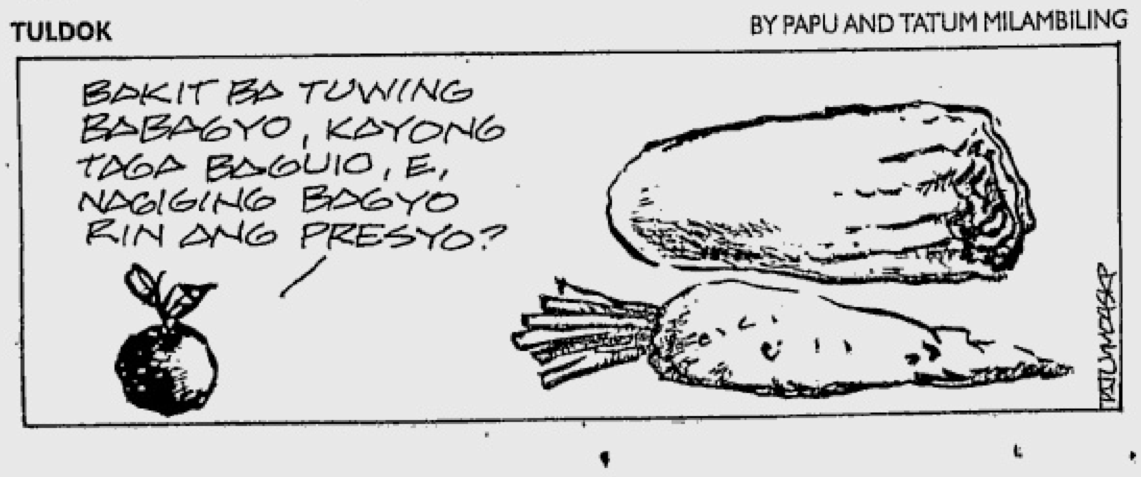
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NAG-DONATE TAYO NG DAMIT, TAYO NAMAN ANG WALANG DAMIT!!
NAKAGAWA NAMAN TAYO NG KABUTIHAN, DE NIRO!!
ATSAKA SIGURADONG MAY MAGBIBIGAY SA ATIN NG DAMIT!! AYAN NA NGA, O!!!
'DI NGA LANG PANG ARAW-ARAW NA DAMIT!!
CHIONGLO 12/11

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BAKIT BA TUWING BABAGYO, KAYONG TAGA BAGUIO, E, NAGIGING BAGYO RIN ANG PRESYO?
TATUMPAPU

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are an intense, thoughtful person who is serious about what you value. You're extremely goal-directed and purposeful. You're also physically energetic. This is a powerful combination and makes you influential in your world. You always recover from drastic setbacks because you have an indomitable spirit. Focus on your closest partnerships this year.
Birthdate of: Sen. John Kerry, politician; Alexander Solzhenitsyn, writer; Rita Moreno, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today is the perfect time to think about how you can get training to improve your career or increase your education to have a better understanding of the world.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is an excellent day to think about how much you respect (or not) the values of others. It's important to appreciate that we don't all share the same values.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Today's New Moon sits directly opposite your sign. Since a New Moon is a wonderful time to begin new habits, how can you improve your relationships with others?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's time to turn over a new leaf at work. What can you do to improve your job and your relations with co-workers?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're entering a two-year period that enhances love affairs, romance, professional sports, relations with children and your approach to the arts. Expect more fun!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Think about how to make improvements at home and improvements within your family dynamic. Today's New Moon is the perfect time to do this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You value how you relate to others because you need people in your life. Today's New Moon is the perfect time to think about how to improve your communicating style.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You might come up with new moneymaking ideas today. If so, write them down. They're worth your consideration.

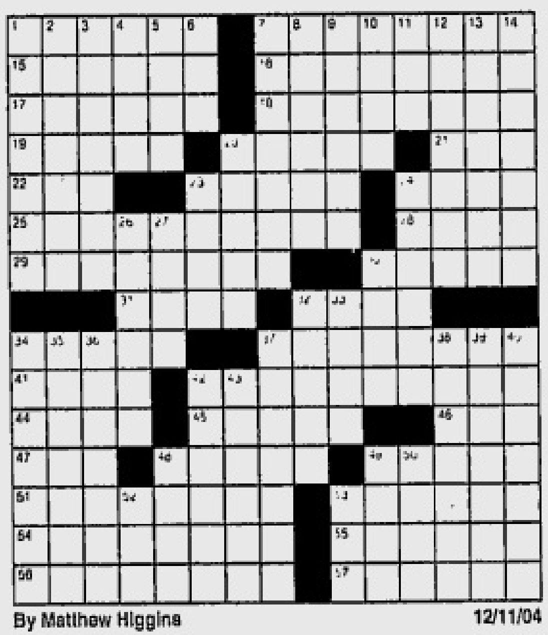
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today's New Moon occurs in your sign! (This is the only one all year.) This is a signal for you to check out your appearance, your self-image and the impression you make on others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good time to get in touch with your inner world. Remember, it's what is going on inside that makes the external world come together.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Think about the friends you have. Do you hang out with quality people? Friends are enormous influences on our lives because they can influence our choices.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Today's New Moon takes place at the top of your chart. This means it's a good day to consider your life path and your life direction in general. Where do you want to be five years from now?

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

12/11/04

ACROSS
1 Top stories
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15 Haitian religion
16 Primary downward growths
17 Buries
18 Shakes up
19 Free-trade org. based in Jakarta
20 Conspirators' plans
21 Before, to be brief
22 Bath place
23 One Indian language
24 Practice punching
25 Pertaining to rhetorical style
28 One joule per second
29 Training plans
30 Green gems
31 Public disturbance
32 Drawn tight
34 Send in payment
37 Petroleum-yielding sedimentary rock
41 Flair
42 Subordinate
44 Warbled
45 "As You Like It" forest
46 Hot spring
47 John Dos Passos trilogy
48 Type of piano
49 Young wolf
51 Nasty headache
53 Finnish baths
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55 Open ties
56 Makes insane
57 Ball lasses

DOWN
1 Flier
2 Monk's hairstyle
3 Carryall
4 Notion
5 Country humor
6 Distress signal
7 Inclined type
8 City on Honshu Island
9 Place for the contagious
10 Table scraps
11 Extinct flightless bird
12 Reporter's tool
13 Repeat
14 States forcefully
20 Write letter by letter
23 Nabisco favorite
24 Wake of a scythe
26 Growing weary
27 Leave off the list
30 Equitable
32 Like some roofs
33 Ladd or Greenspan
34 Took up again
35 Hard to catch
36 Person in charge
37 Aged state
38 Stock of weapons
39 French mathematician
40 Slips by
42 Compassionate
43 Mandarin or navel
48 Make headway
49 Taper off
50 Ship's shell
52 Genetics letters
53 Grinder or hoagie

Friday's Puzzle Solved

R	A	B	I	D	■	G	I	Z	M	O	■	H	O	W
A	L	O	N	E	■	A	L	I	E	N	■	U	R	E
F	O	O	T	B	A	L	L	P	R	O	■	G	I	N
T	E	N	E	T	S	■	S	U	M	■	H	E	E	D
■	■	■	N	O	L	O	■	P	A	N	O	P	L	Y
M	I	S	T	R	E	A	T	■	N	O	M	E	■	■
A	L	A	■	S	E	R	I	F	■	V	E	R	S	A
L	I	T	E	■	P	E	T	A	L	■	S	S	T	S
L	A	U	R	A	■	D	A	C	E	S	■	O	U	T
■	■	■	R	I	G	A	■	N	I	N	T	E	N	D	O
C	O	N	C	E	R	T	■	A	T	O	M	■	■	■
E	M	M	A	■	G	U	T	■	I	M	P	O	S	E
L	E	O	■	M	Y	T	H	I	C	A	L	G	O	D
E	G	O	■	A	L	T	E	R	■	C	O	L	O	N
B	A	N	■	S	E	I	N	E	■	H	Y	E	N	A

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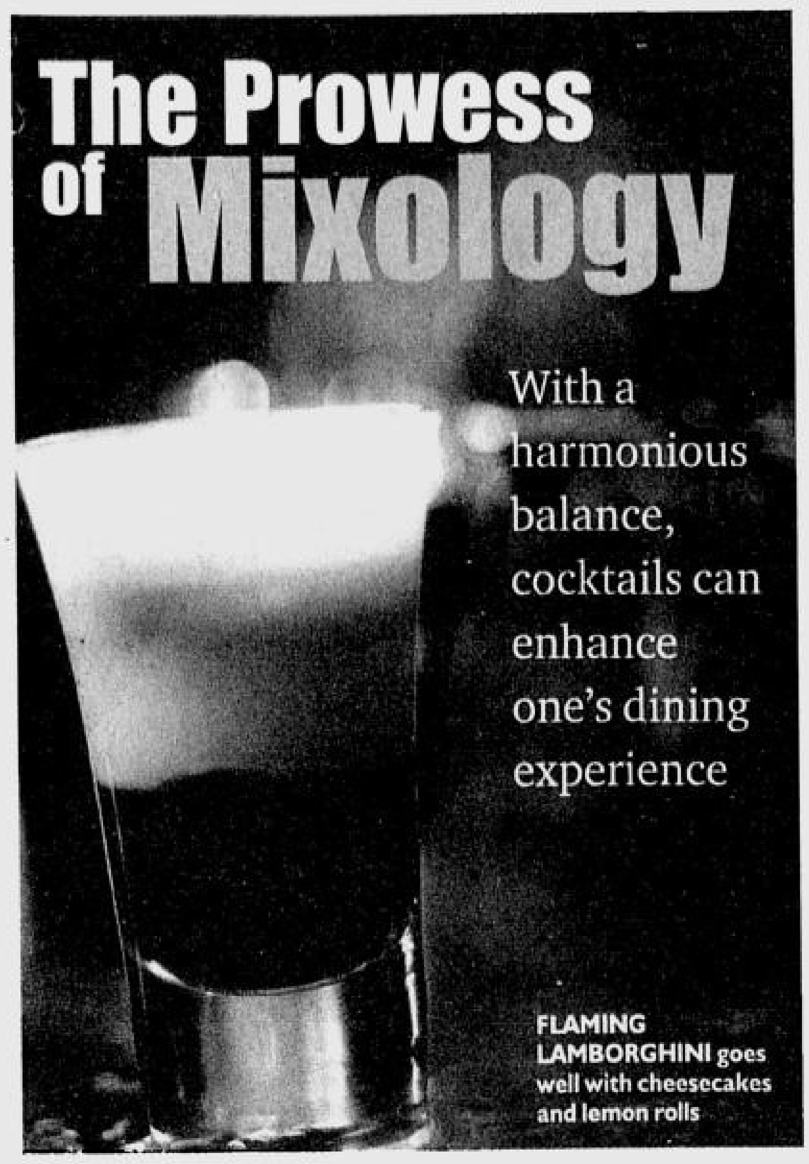
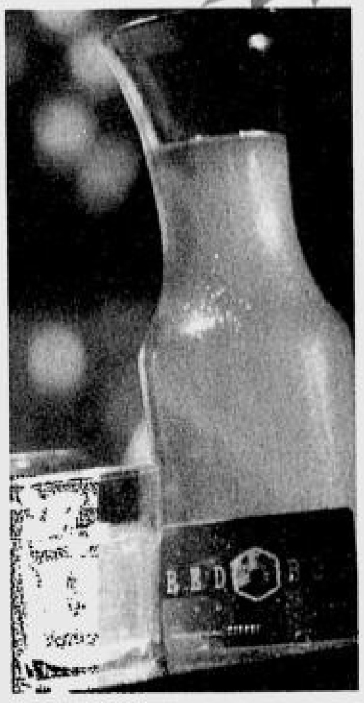
12/11/04

The Prowess of Mixology

With a harmonious balance, cocktails can enhance one's dining experience



FLAMING LAMBORGHINI goes well with cheesecakes and lemon rolls



LIQUID TAO—Red Box's special new drink redefines the karaoke and cocktail experience for Filipinos.

RED BOX's KAMIKAZE is a melange of sweetness and potency.

SEDUCTION goes well with curry, spring rolls and samosas.

LYCHEE MARTINI goes well with seafood.

By Cheryl Tiu

I'VE always had an awfully familiar relationship with alcohol. Apart from being my constant companion at nights out with friends, I spent last summer bartending at a lush hotel lounge—for fun. My bartending stint taught me to mix some of my favorite cocktails and shooters, as well as to more precisely discern amongst the complexity of its glasses. Armed with the knowledge of what the most popular alcoholic beverages are made of, I've creased a habit of ordering the most unorthodox, exotic-sounding drinks to treat my senses to a ride lacquered with impulsion.

On Nov. 23, Red Box Karaoke unveiled some of its most popular drinks alongside its gastronomies for a food-and-beverage pairing that reads consummate. Apparently, the interplay of drinks with the various flavors and textures of food is often more palatable to the tongue. "There are no hard and fast rules on pairing," says Red Box Karaoke advertising and promotions director Paolo del Rosario, "but with successful pairing based on frequent tasting and a memory for previous winning pairings, the more satisfying and memorable your dining experience will be."

Operations manager James Aguilar was the official bartender for the night—whisking up drinks while simultaneously augmenting bouts of bottle-flipping in between. Chef Philip Golding then sampled these concoctions and suggested the culinary fares he deemed most apt.

Seduction, which screams of Kahlua, melon liqueur and Bailey's is best paired with curry, spring rolls and vegetable samosas.

To be daringly consumed with a straw while the flaming Sambuca is being poured, the Flaming Lamborghini of Kahlua, Bailey's and vodka goes best with cheesecakes or lemon rolls.

For the Kamikaze, James asked for my assistance in shaking the concoction and I was later on presented the drink along with a rose. I thought Red Box's Kamikaze was latticed with the perfect amount of sweetness coupled with the right amount of potency, which prompted me to bask in sips a little too fast for a cocktail. According to Chef Golding, it is best with spareribs, tonkatsu, barbeque—or even sorbet.

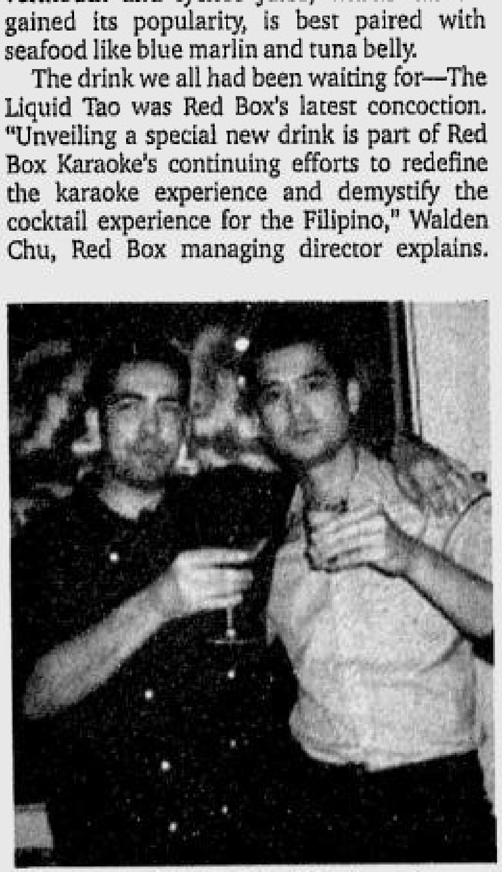
The Lychee Martini, a fusion of vodka, dry vermouth and lychee juice, which has regained its popularity, is best paired with seafood like blue marlin and tuna belly.

The drink we all had been waiting for—The Liquid Tao was Red Box's latest concoction. "Unveiling a special new drink is part of Red Box Karaoke's continuing efforts to redefine the karaoke experience and demystify the cocktail experience for the Filipino," Walden Chu, Red Box managing director explains.

Here was the answer to my prayers of frolicking my taste buds in an exotic unorthodoxy, something exclusive only to Red Box. We were all given the chance to try it and I loved how the whiskey and green tea mellifluously blended in my mouth. It was like an Oriental fusion drink that's almost indescribable by words but recognizably invigorating to the senses. Apart from its delightfully addicting taste, the classic green tea in the drink undergoes a traditional steaming process to arrest the oxidation of the leaf and retain more of the nutrients. The result is an excellent thirst-quencher that holds a lot of vitamin C, antioxidants, chlorophyll and minerals. The Liquid Tao is best paired with Red Box's very own Louisiana Fried Chicken, Nutty Chicken Fingers or Chicken Drummettes.

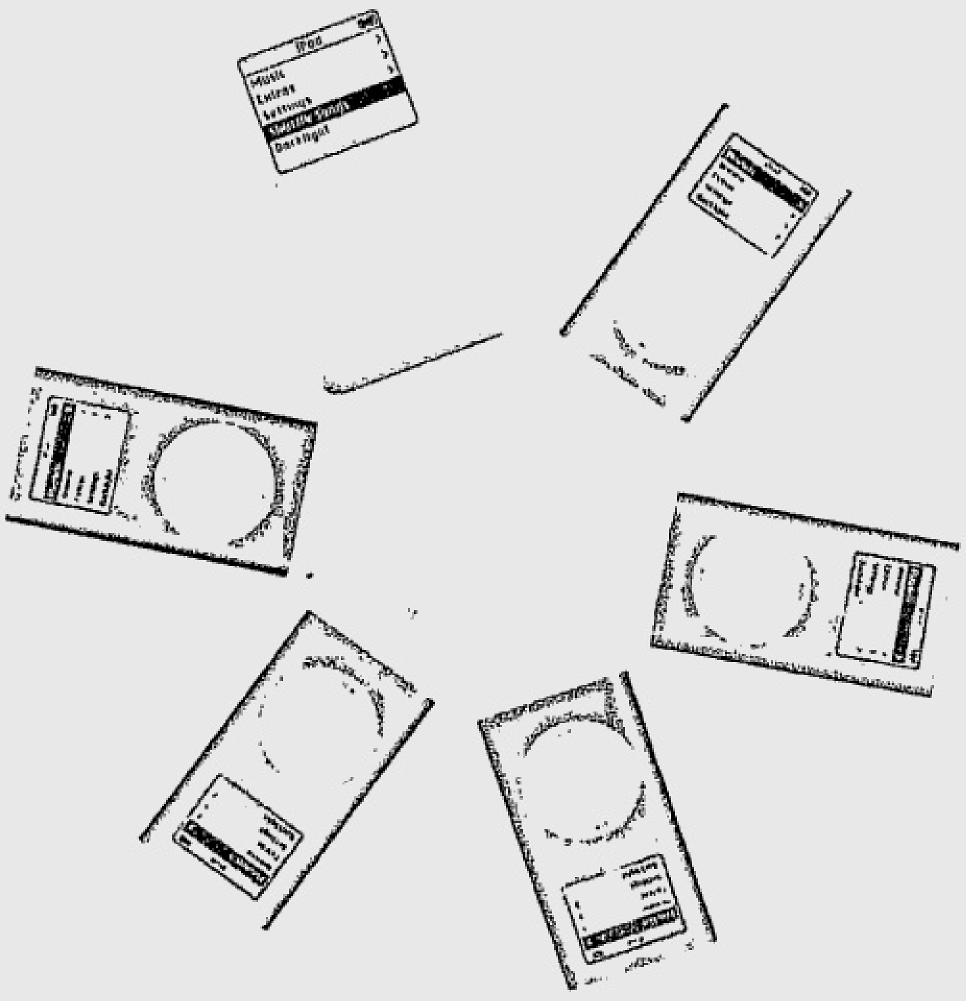
I used to think that it was gross to eat while indulging in alcohol, thus I never understood the whole *pulutan* culture. In the past, mixing cocktails or shooters with real food has often clashed, rendering an unpleasant aftertaste and a condition often close to heaving. But after participating in the art of Mixology, it made a lot of sense. Though I was quite familiar with bartending and mixing drinks, I still learned something new at the Red Box Mixology: with a harmonious balance, cocktails and shooters can superbly enhance one's dining experience.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com



CHEF Philip Golding & Red Box karaoke operations manager James Aguilar. PHOTOS BY CHERYL TIU

I'm dreaming of a white (or shiny silver, gold, green, pink or blue) Christmas…



With a winning combination of storage and portability, an intuitive user interface, and seamless integration with iTunes for Mac and Windows, iPod and iPod mini offer the ultimate in portable digital music players.

Visit your nearest iPod authorized reseller today to find out more about the iPod and to enjoy exclusive promotions.

Enjoy up to 2 years' peace of mind with hardware coverage plus technical support via phone, email or web with the AppleCare Protection Plan for your iPod.

Suggested Retail Price:
iPod 20GB PhP 18,780 / 40GB PhP 25,610
iPod mini PhP 15,740
AppleCare Protection Plan PhP 3,500

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The Bipolar Express

From page H1

flat, weather-beaten colors they used to depict the random 1950's Midwest setting. (Some say the movie was better in IMAX theaters. But since there are none of those in these parts, that point is out the window.) I really couldn't help but wait for soda-chugging polar bears to enter the frame at some point.

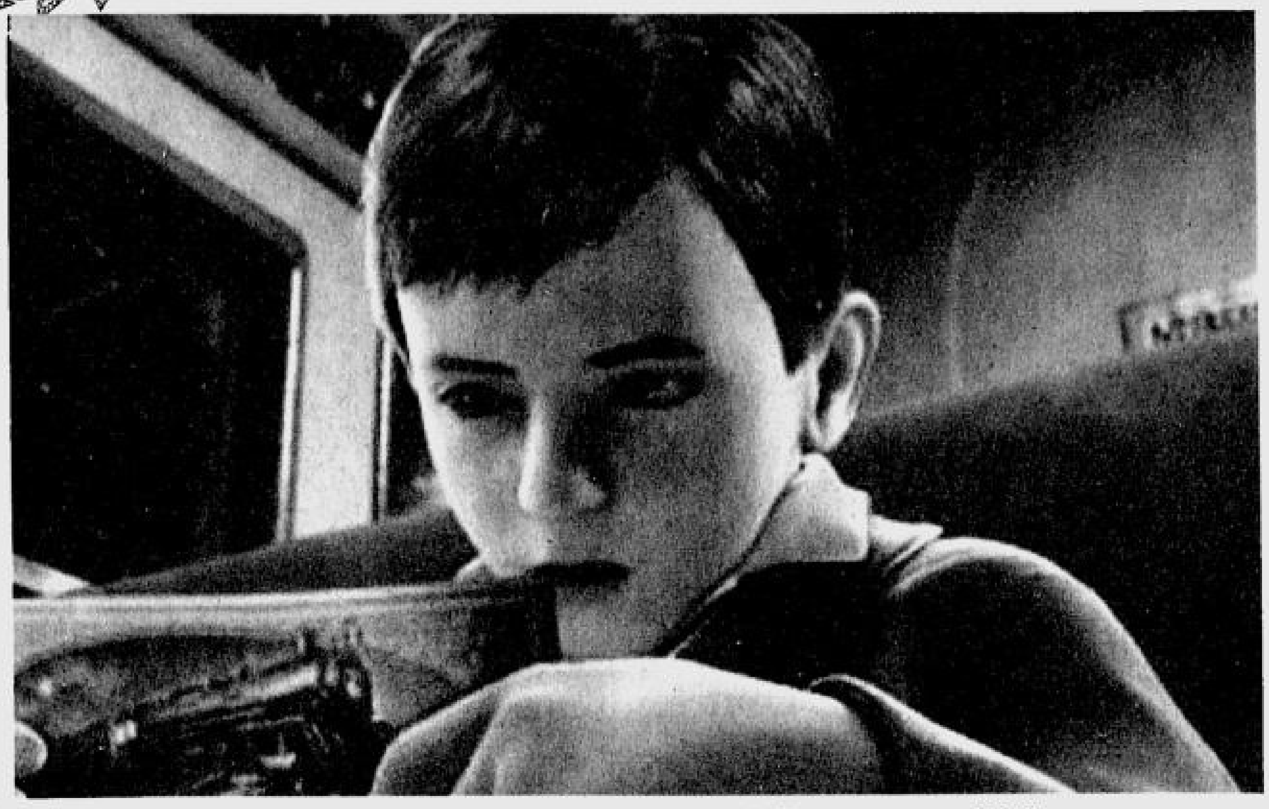
Pile-up

Pulling into a crouch with a two-fister of popcorn and anticipation, I then took note of the film's rather watered down story. Okay, I knew that turning a kiddie speed-read into a 99-minute extravaganza posed a few challenges. Question is, did they?

First of all, "The Polar Express" rambled and derailed in a pile-up of derivative plot lines. I saw throwbacks to "Fear Factor," as Hero Boy (voice of Tom Hanks mixed in with Daryl Sabara from "Spy Kids") walked on top of a moving train during a snow storm, and "Mission Impossible," when he hopped from one train carriage to another without an adult escort. What's more, the golden tickets were clearly ripped off from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory," while the uncalled-for duet between Hero Girl (voice of Nona Gaye) and Lonely Boy (voice of Peter Scolari) stank of "American Idol."

Next, the situations in "The Polar Express" were too dark and grim for kids to like. I spotted a few rugrats hopelessly attempting to keep still during the joy-ride-turned-train-wreck scene. (Earlier, I spied on a few bothered parents as they explained that little boys taking off with scuzzy strangers—very Michael Jackson—is something that should never happen. I would've beaten the crap out of both the Conductor and the Hobo with a large piece of wood and called 911 pronto.)

Finally, the entire movie hit its climax with Santa Claus giving Hero Boy a bell. A bell! This was something the boy had found anyway so what gives? As far as the satisfactory rising action was concerned, this conclusion did not hold up. It would've been more awesome if the kid got a more substantial present than a glorified dog whistle. After all, he nearly lost his life in the damn train ride to the North Pole!



HERO Boy went to the North Pole, nearly died in a train accident, and all he got was a stupid bell.

Do you think the Tin Man would've settled for anything less than a heart when he finally got to meet the Wizard of Oz? Nope. In contrast to, say, "Finding Nemo," "The Polar Express" was thoroughly vague; since kids have the attention spans of goldfish, this movie really isn't for them unless you're a parent raring to begin years of therapy.

And the most important part, "The Polar Express" lacked compelling roles and characters. My hopes of reclaiming at least some amazement were dashed by multiple versions of Tom Hanks (Hero Boy/Father/Conductor/Hobo/ Scrooge/Santa), which made the movie feel heavy-handed and totally creepy. (The opening scene alone marked the first of approximately 100 million times I heard Hanks' voice booming from the outer reaches of the theater's massive Dolby speakers.)

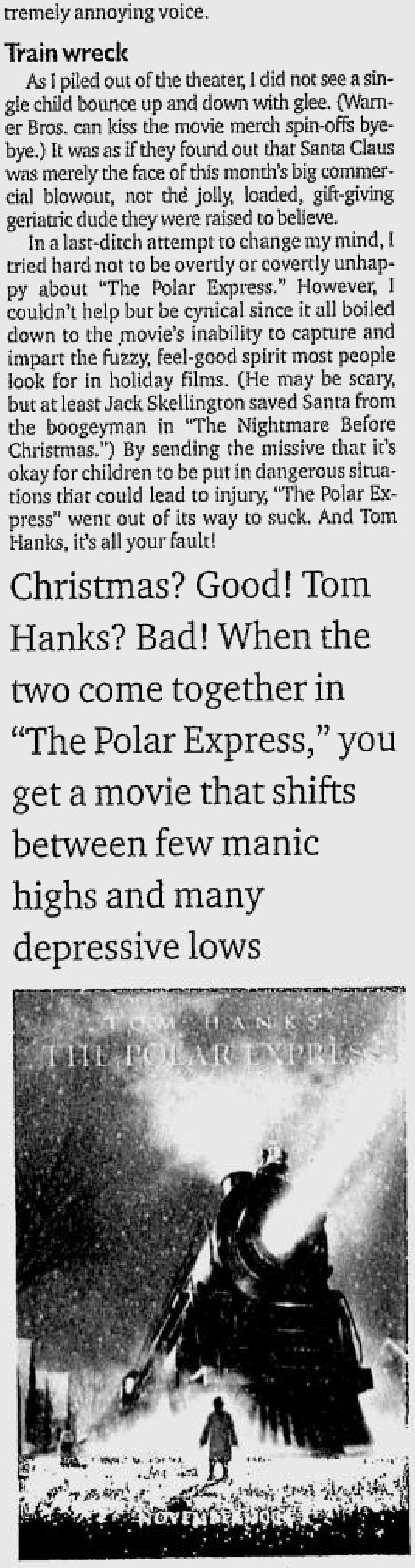
Overachieving may have worked for Mike Myers in "Austin Powers: Goldmember," but not for Tom. It looked like there was enough money for only one star in "The Polar Express." Whether it was his rock star-wannabe Santa attending to millions of elf groupies or the Deepak Chopra-ness of his Conductor (Conductor: "Sometimes the most real things in this world are the things we can't see." Me: "Sometimes a bottle of OxyContin blunts the pain away."), Tom Hanks overpowered and consequently disabled whatever magic "The Polar Express" had. I couldn't help but shake my head in disappointment when I realized the most memorable personality in the entire movie was Know It All, the very Woody Allen/Jar Jar Binks goofball who had an extremely annoying voice.

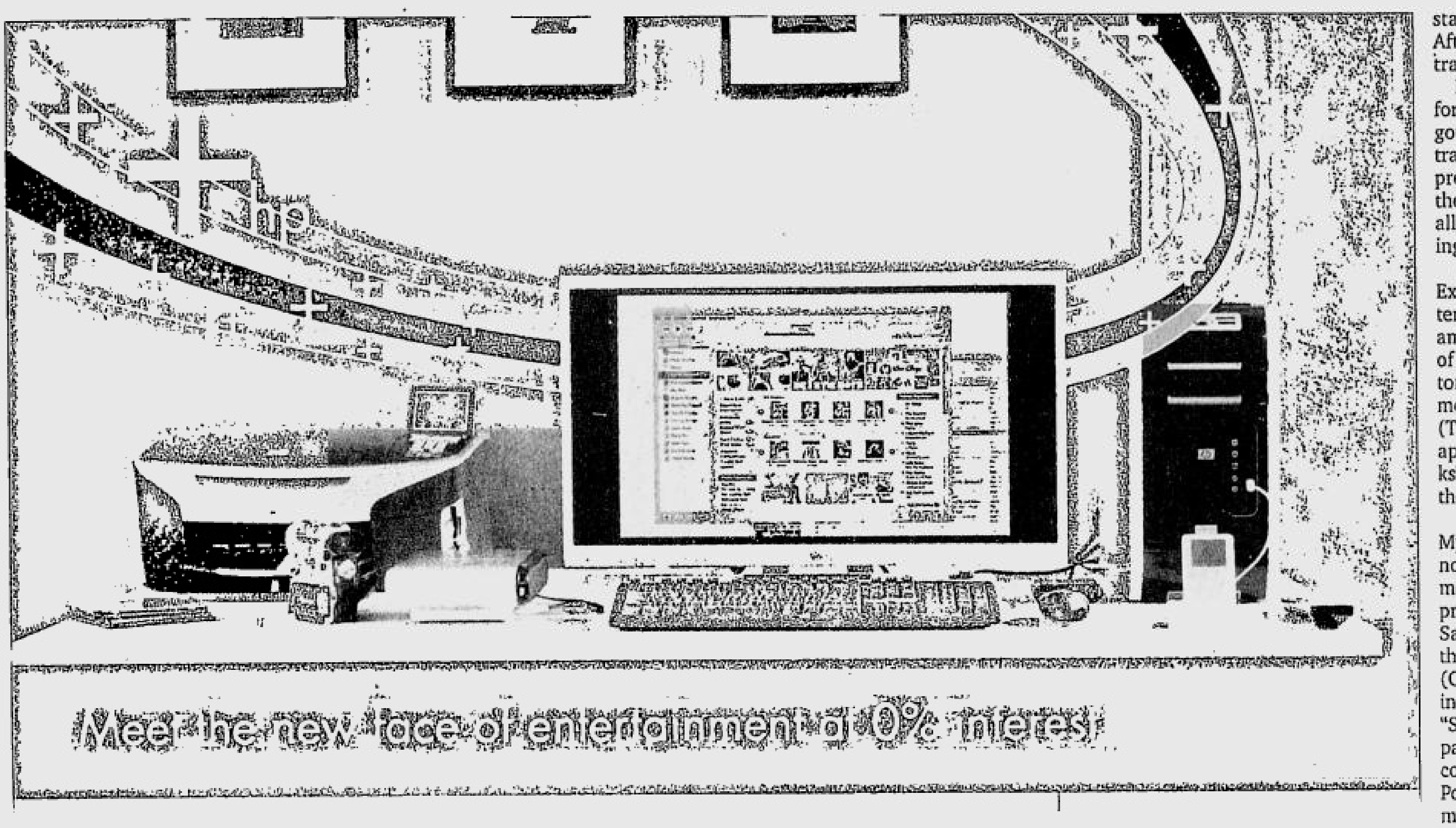
Train wreck

As I piled out of the theater, I did not see a single child bounce up and down with glee. (Warner Bros. can kiss the movie merch spin-offs bye-bye.) It was as if they found out that Santa Claus was merely the face of this month's big commercial blowout, not the jolly, loaded, gift-giving geriatric dude they were raised to believe.

In a last-ditch attempt to change my mind, I tried hard not to be overtly or covertly unhappy about "The Polar Express." However, I couldn't help but be cynical since it all boiled down to the movie's inability to capture and impart the fuzzy, feel-good spirit most people look for in holiday films. (He may be scary, but at least Jack Skellington saved Santa from the boogeyman in "The Nightmare Before Christmas.") By sending the missive that it's okay for children to be put in dangerous situations that could lead to injury, "The Polar Express" went out of its way to suck. And Tom Hanks, it's all your fault!

Christmas? Good! Tom Hanks? Bad! When the two come together in "The Polar Express," you get a movie that shifts between few manic highs and many depressive lows





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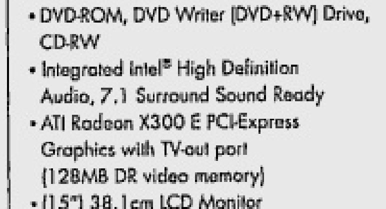
The face of entertainment will never be the same again!

HP recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.

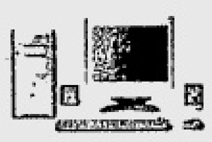


HP PAVILION w1158d
ENTERTAINMENT PC SUITE

P8,165.83 per month for 12 months (0% INTEREST FREE)

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 540 with HT Technology+*^
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- 512MB DDR
- 160GB Serial ATA Hard Drive, 7200RPM
- DVD-ROM, DVD Writer (DVD+RW) Drive, CD-RW
- Integrated Intel® High Definition Audio, 7.1 Surround Sound Ready
- ATI Radeon X300 E PCI-Express Graphics with TV-out port (128MB DR video memory)
- (15") 38.1cm LCD Monitor
- 9-in-1 Digital Media Reader supporting: CompactFlash Type I/II, SmartMedia (SM), MultiMedia Card (MMC), Secure Digital (SD), Memory Stick/Memory Stick Pro (MS/MS PRO), IBM Micro Drive, xD Media

^(3.20GHz, 1MB L2 Cache, 800MHz FSB)



HP PAVILION a526d
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Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 2.60GHz, Microsoft® Windows® XP Home, 256MB DDR, 40GB Ultra DMA Hard Drive, CD Writer (48x24x48x) Drive, 1.44MB Floppy Drive, Integrated 6 Channel Surround Sound ready, High speed 56kbps modem, 10/100 LAN (Broadband ready), Integrated Intel® Extreme Graphics, Up to 64MB of Dynamic Video memory, HP (17") 43.18cm Multimedia mx704 CRT monitor, One-year limited warranty

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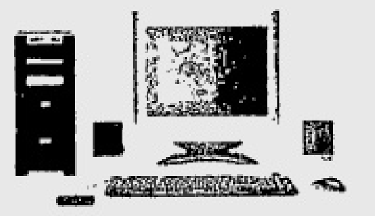
- Integrated Intel® Extreme Graphics (Up to 64MB video memory)
- (17") 43.18cm CRT Monitor
- 9-in-1 Digital Media Reader supporting: CompactFlash Type I/II, SmartMedia (SM), MultiMedia Card (MMC), Secure Digital (SD), Memory Stick/Memory Stick Pro (MS/MS PRO), IBM Micro Drive, xD Media
- 1-year Limited Worldwide Warranty



HP PAVILION w1156d
ENTERTAINMENT PC SUITE

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- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
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- 80GB Serial ATA Hard Drive, 7200RPM
- CD-RW, DVD Writer (DVD+RW) Drive
- Integrated Intel® High Definition Audio, 7.1 Surround Sound Ready
- Integrated Intel® GMA 900 Graphics (Up to 128MB of dynamic video memory)
- (17") 43.18cm CRT Monitor
- 9-in-1 Digital Media Reader supporting: CompactFlash Type I/II, SmartMedia (SM), MultiMedia Card (MMC), Secure Digital (SD), Memory Stick/Memory Stick Pro (MS/MS PRO), IBM Micro Drive, xD Media
- 1-year Limited Worldwide Warranty

^(3.0GHz, 1MB L2 Cache, 800MHz FSB)

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intel inside pentium 4

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5998 Series of 2004

PRETTY PLEASING PALS: Jennie Chua and Linda Tan, owners of Pretty Fit

AT PRETTY FIT ALABANG: Bianca Valerio, Tina Chua and Nicoletta Bell

EXHIBIT STYLE: Celine Lopez [illegible] pinup girl style

Pretty wet feet

By Tim Yap
Photos by Eddie Boy Escudero

Nothing, just nothing can stop die- fashionistas from indulging in their obsession.

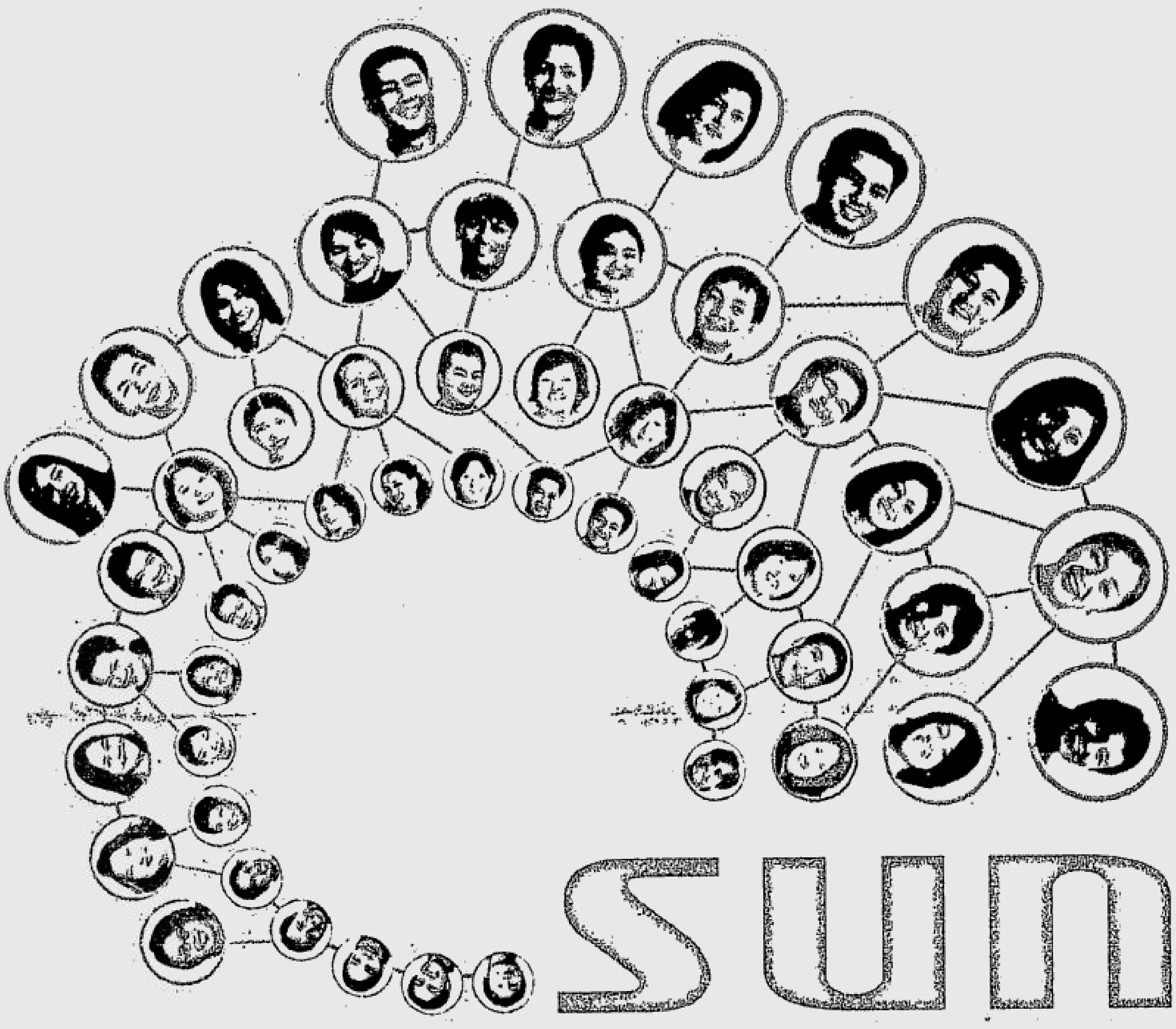
WHAT: The unveiling of the Pretty Fit and Beetle Bug exhibit at the Ayala Museum. Male models welcomed guests with Super umbrellas to make sure that their pretty feet wouldn't get wet.

WHO: Typhoon-brave fashionistas, loyal Pretty Fit (yup, I can be tongue-tying—so say it again) and Beetle Bug clients all feasted on the chocolate fondue and [illegible] by Margarita Forés and [illegible] by M Cafe.

WHAT ELSE: Earlier during the day, owners Linda Tan and Jennie Chua opened two new stores—one in Alabang Town Center and another one at the Shangri-La Plaza mall. This aside from their Pied Piper of a flagship store in

FASHION FORWARD THINKERS: The duo behind Pretty Fit and Beetle Bug in Singapore

JUST [illegible] Good Finds, [illegible]



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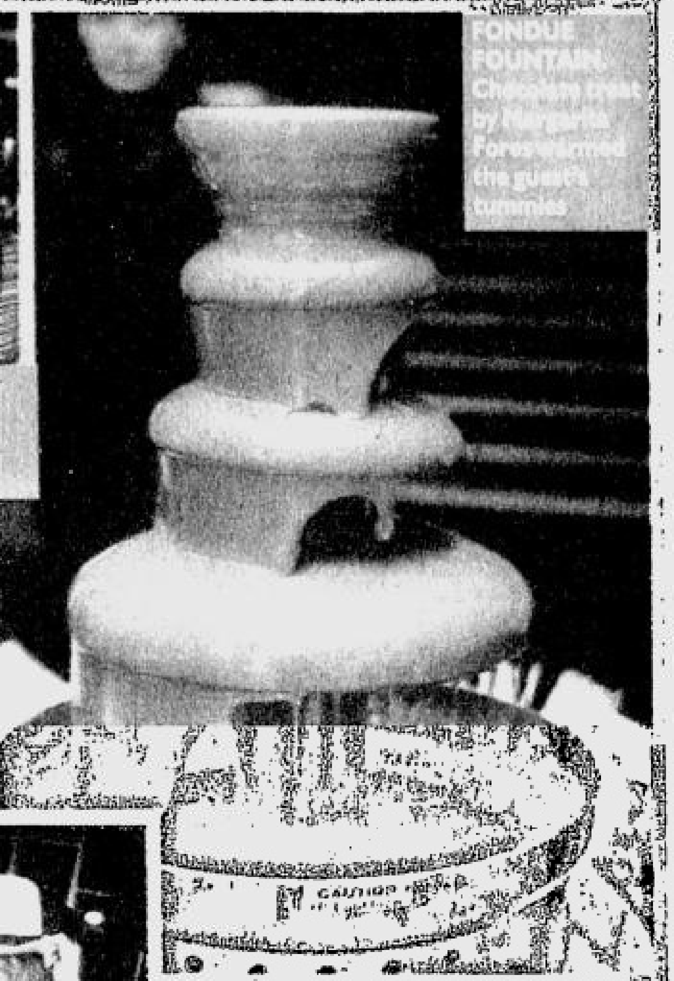
FONDNESS FOR FEET: Liz [illegible]

[illegible] **JENNIE** the [illegible]

CHEERY LADIES [illegible]



FONDUE FOUNTAIN. Chocolate treat by Margarita Fores warmed the guest's tummies

Pretty wet feet

[illegible] hear another femme fatale store named after our national fruit. Later, everyone indulged in the shoe brand's latest collection. Not even the weather could stop these fun folks from being pretty, pretty, pretty. The good thing about it was the guests that had gathered also suddenly organized an impromptu fund drive for the typhoon victims. [illegible]

HAPPY TOGETHER [illegible]

SENSATION [illegible]

JANET MARSH [illegible]

HELLO [illegible]

DANCE [illegible]

BEETLE BUG. Brent [illegible] Anton [illegible]

POPOUT [illegible]

PHOTO OP [illegible]

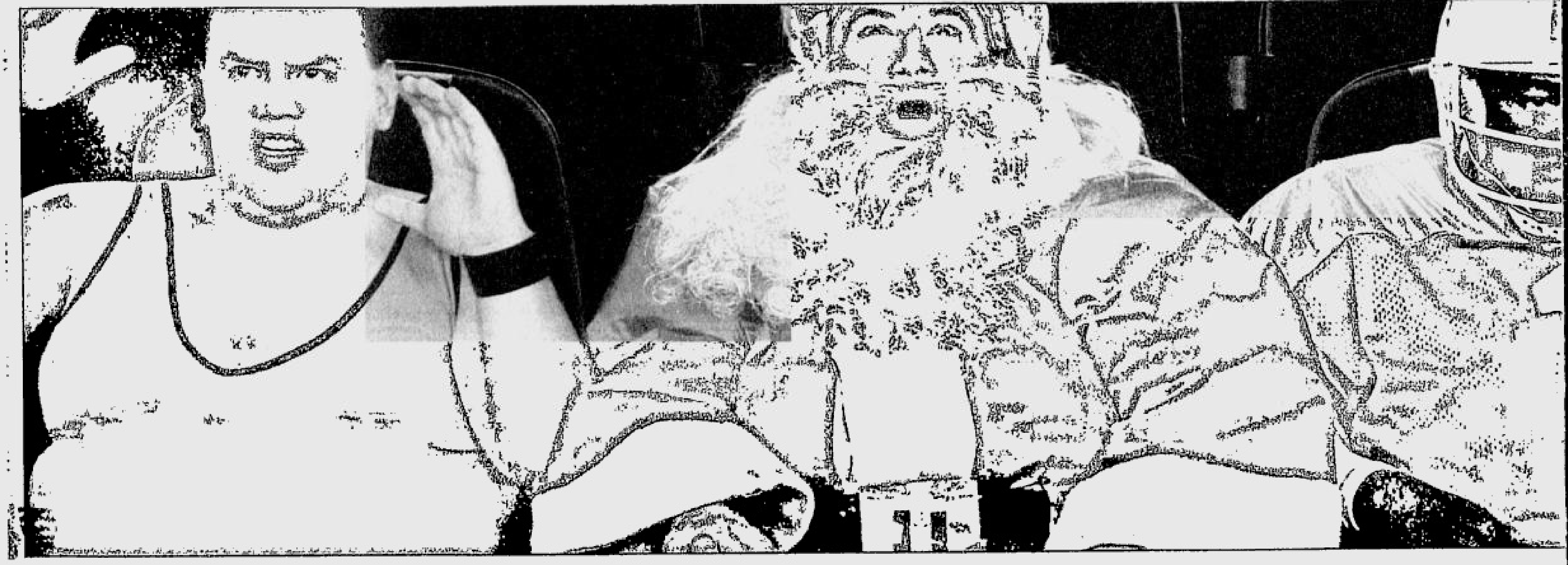
ZEGNA SENSATION [illegible]

TWO WHITE: Liz [illegible]

CUTIE FIT [illegible]

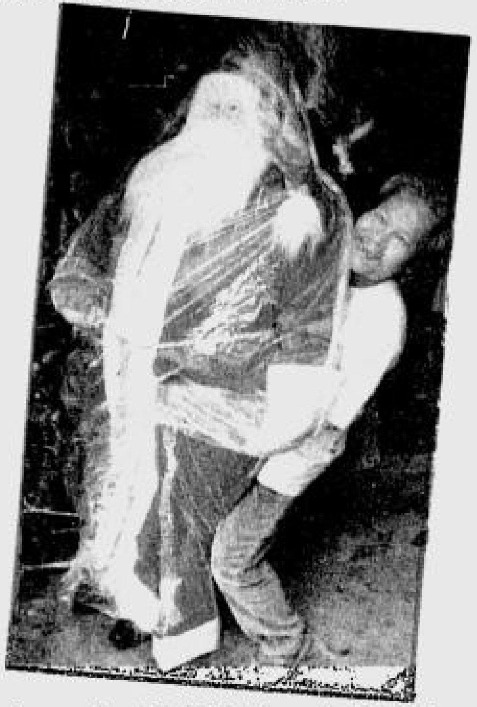
PRETTY [illegible]

LAUGHTER BUG. DJ Montano and Apoc [illegible]



Oh caption, my caption!

Text by Gino de la Paz and Tals Diaz



Winning caption #1: AND this one's for missing my fifth birthday!

Sender: Mike Limpag

Winning caption #2: Told Daddy I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus. This is what Santa gets from Daddy!

Marlo Henson

HO-HO-HOLY crap! Santa must have a really long list of naughty kids out there, judging from some of the entries flooding our Super! inbox. Then again, we've made our own list, checked it twice, and we've come up with not one but TWO secret prizes for the winning wise guys. Heck, 'tis the season of giving anyway! So congratulations, Merry Christmas and yada yada yada, to Mike Limpag and Marlo Henson! Claim your prizes from INQUIRER's Marketing Elves at 897-8808 and look for Ching. Here's a roundup of the other captions that jingled our bells:

Uhm... I can explain...

Sender: Adrian Banog

Manong wrestles Hulk Hogan. *Sender: Christian Miranda*

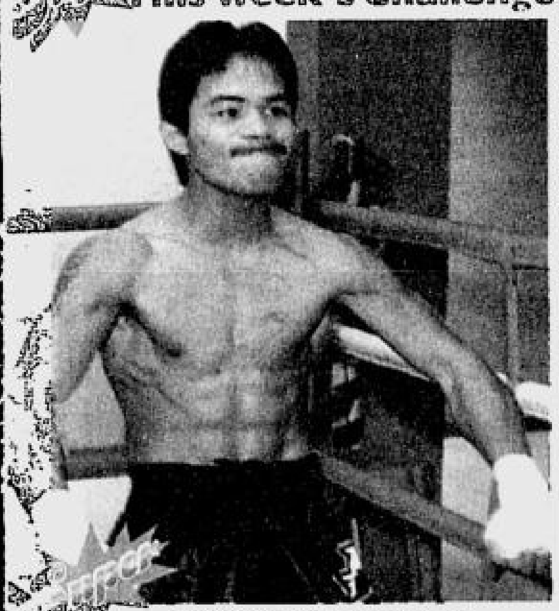
Manong: Hold-up to!
Santa: Ay, wag naman dyan!

Sender: Nikarlo Pedro

Adult Toys for the Big Boys, Limited Christmas Edition!

Sender: Dave Padilla

This Week's Challenge



CAPTION: *Nanggigigil kami...*

With "Yanig sa Taguig" taking place at The Fort Open Field tonight, Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao must be focusing on beating the living crap out of Thai opponent Fahsang 3K Battery. Which means he'll be too busy to see this now. Which means you can caption this photo of him without fear that he'll get back at you and punch the living daylights out of you with his prize-winning fists. Take a good look. He seems to be flexing, don't you think? Then again, he could merely be finding out how long he could hold his breath before he passes out or passes gas, whichever comes first. Ah, enough material for you to work on? Send your captions over to us at super@inquirer.com.ph or text inquirer super name/city/caption and send to 2207 for Globe or 283 for Smart. We can't wait for you to knock us out!

Disney Princess

Magic on her Mind... Dreams Come True

JOIN
the Dreams & Wishes raffle promotion
and be 1 of the 50 lucky winners
to WIN 4 tickets to see the real
Disney Princesses live on ice!

See mechanics poster for details.

Catch the LITTLE PRINCESSES ON THE RAMP
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SM Megamall Dec 12 Atrium
SM Fairview Dec 17 Annex Atrium
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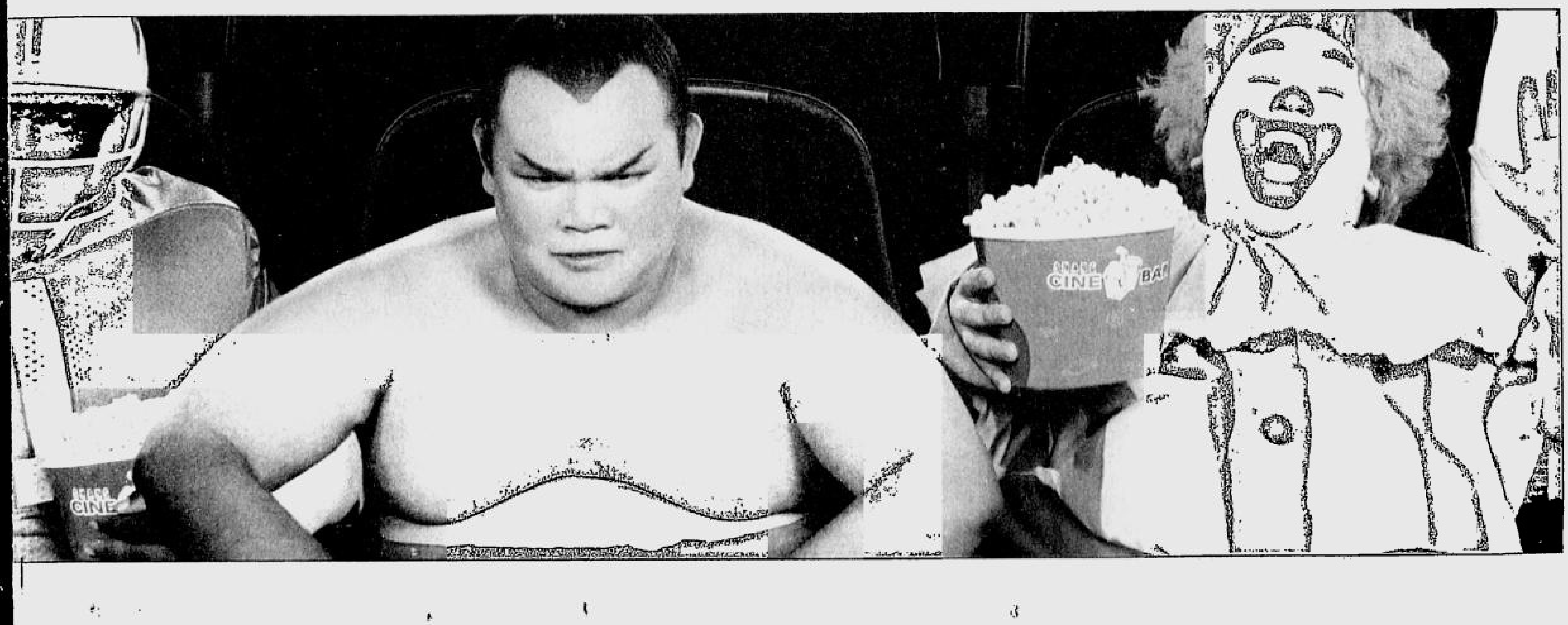
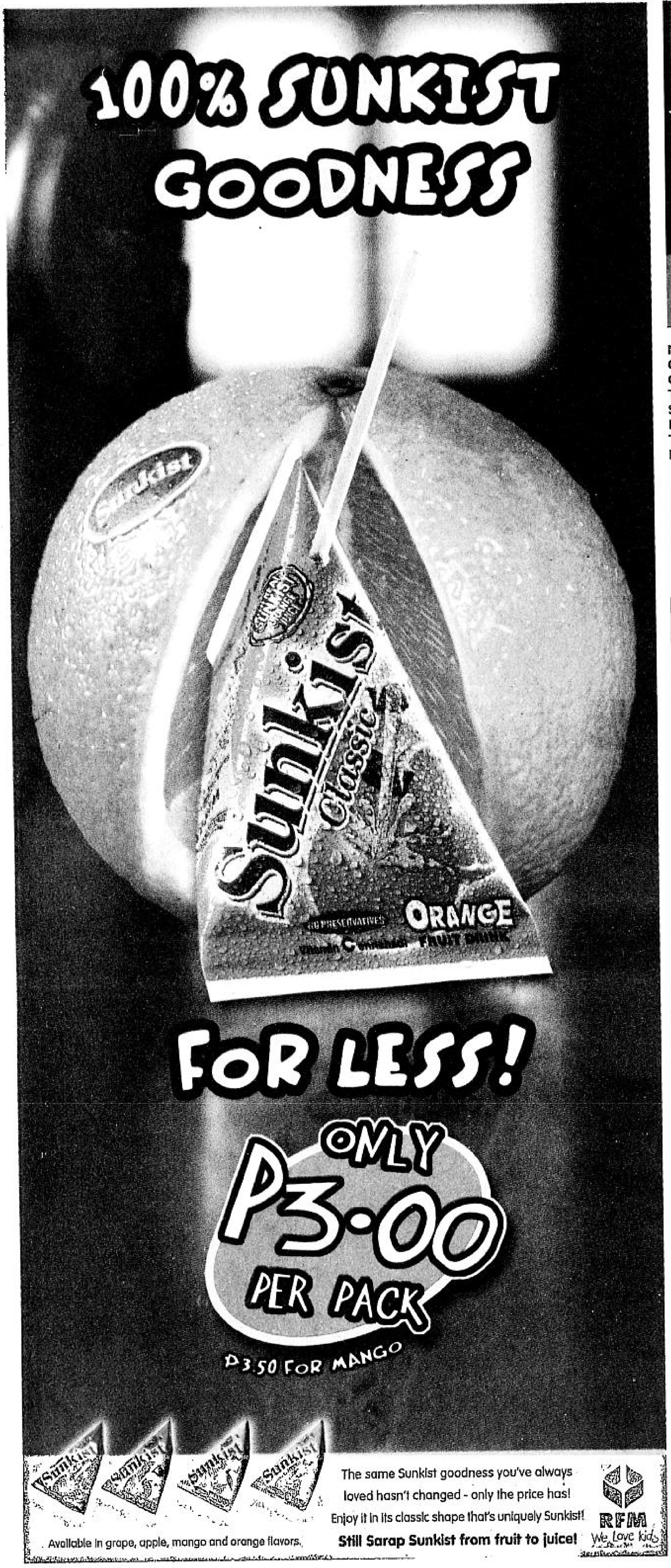
Disney Princess Merchandise are available at all SM Dept. Stores & other leading dept. stores nationwide.





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Enjoy it in its classic shape that's uniquely Sunkist!

Still Sarap Sunkist from fruit to juice!

Available in grape, apple, mango and orange flavors.

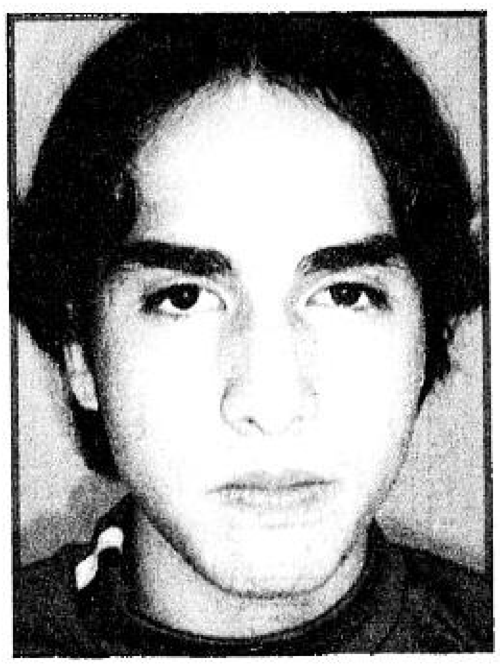
Name: Anton Aguas
Occupation: Driver
Celebrity I resemble the most: Green Goblin
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: Spiderman's costume
I light up when I'm: *Muhmmed*
To brighten my day, you must: *Muhmm* me
E-mail me at: Archmasticore@yahoo.com

Name: Therese Posas
Occupation: Student
Celebrity I resemble the most: Iza Calzado
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: Anything simple, clean and fun.
I light up when I'm: With my friends
To brighten my day, you must: Make me laugh
E-mail me at: ther_cho@hotmail.com

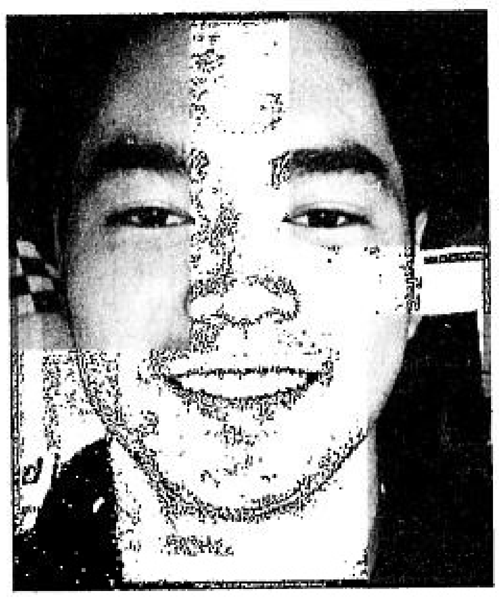
Superfriends

By David Milan

Name: Alex Jhocson
Occupation: Food finisher
Celebrity I resemble the most: Jasmine Trias
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: Nothing, haha
I light up when I'm: In love
To brighten my day, you must: Smile and give me chocolate
E-mail me at: Alexisixixi@yahoo.com

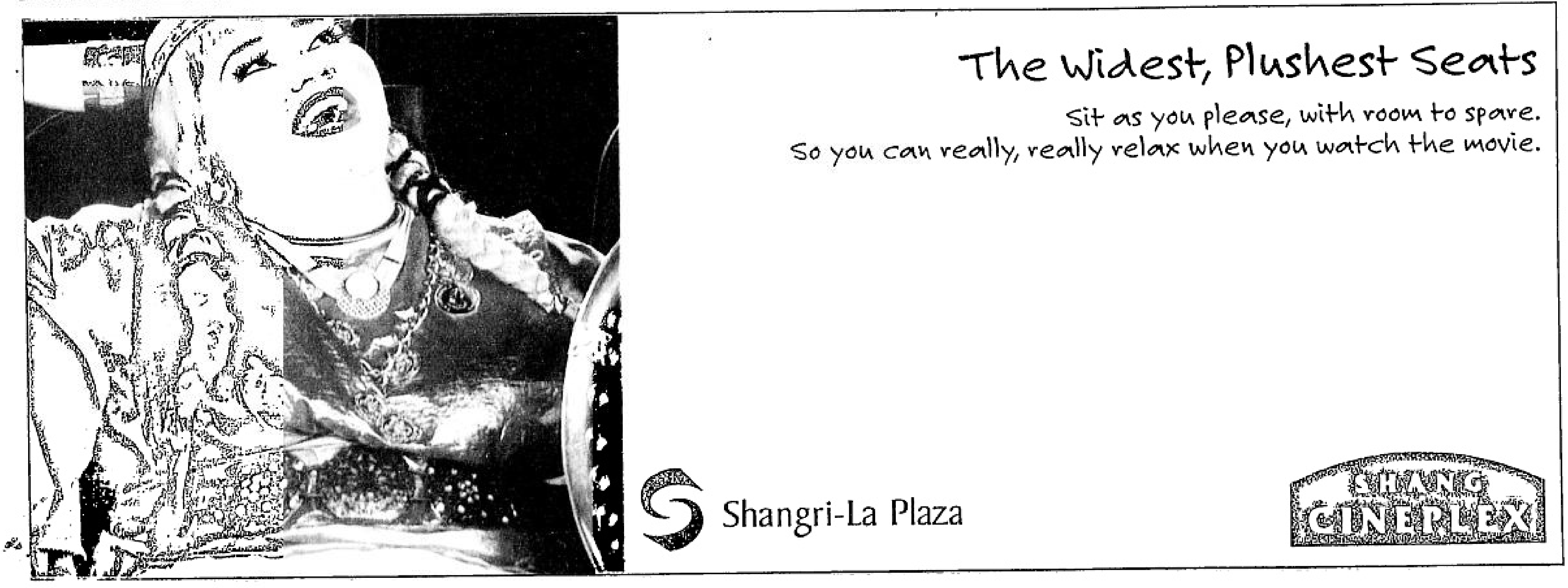


Name: Rafa Santos
Occupation: Musician
Celebrity I resemble the most: Jesus Christ superstar?
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: Sunblock!
I light up when I'm: In love
To brighten my day, you must: Feed me
E-mail me at: getsnowblind@yahoo.com



Name: Paolo Teodoro
Occupation: Basketball fanatic
Celebrity I resemble the most: Greg Martin?
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: My shades and bucket cap
I light up when I'm: Embarrassed
To brighten my day, you must: Know how to compliment me.
E-mail me at: paolo_teodoro@yahoo.com

Name: Jaja Borja
Occupation: Student
Celebrity I resemble the most: You be the judge
The future is so bright, I gotta wear: My pair of diamond earrings and my eternity ring for luck
I light up when I'm: With people that I love
To brighten my day, you must: Know how to make me smile
E-mail me at: jaja_borja@yahoo.com


The Widest, Plushest Seats

Sit as you please, with room to spare.
So you can really, really relax when you watch the movie.

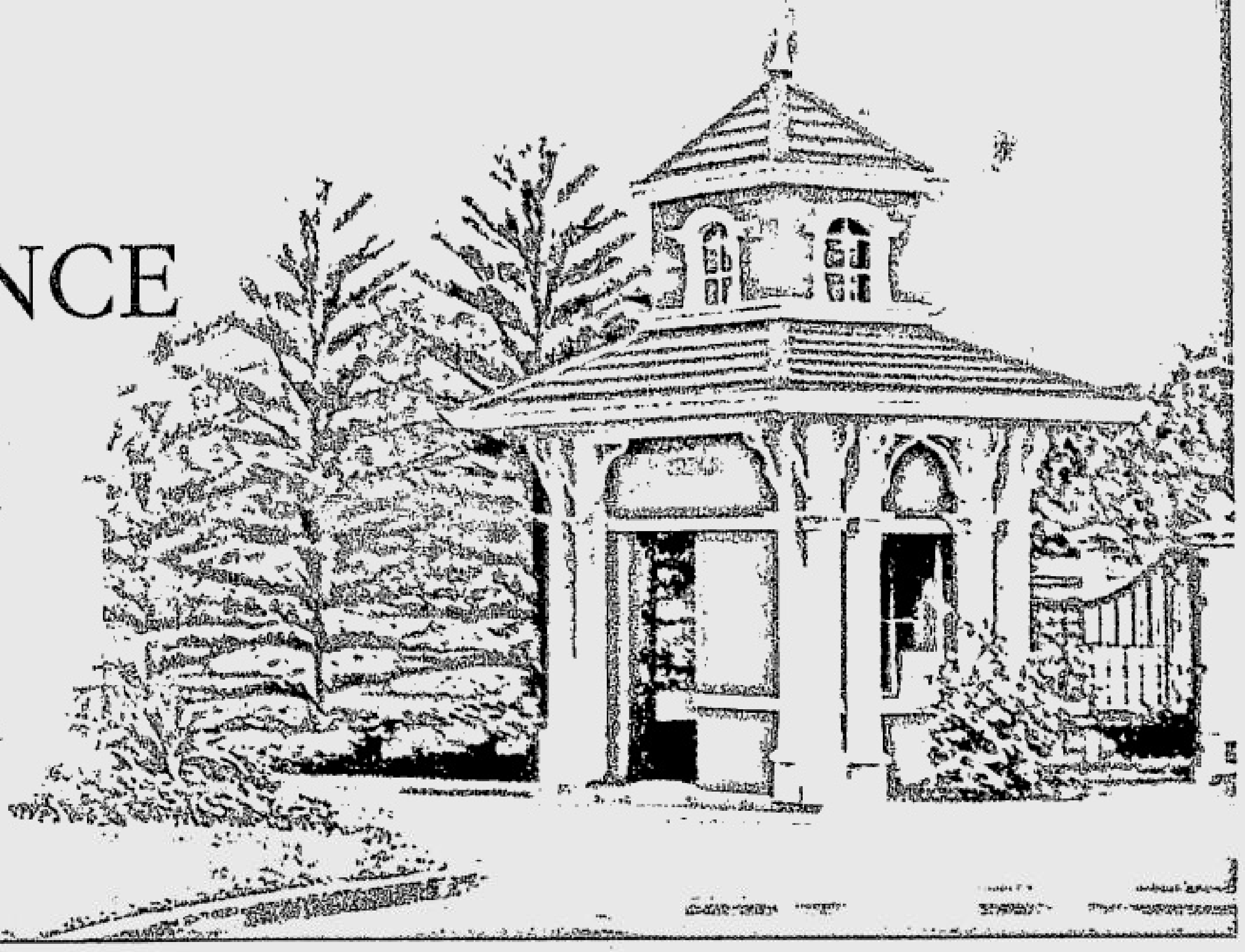
Shangri-La Plaza

SHANG CINEPLEX

Saturday, December 11, 2004

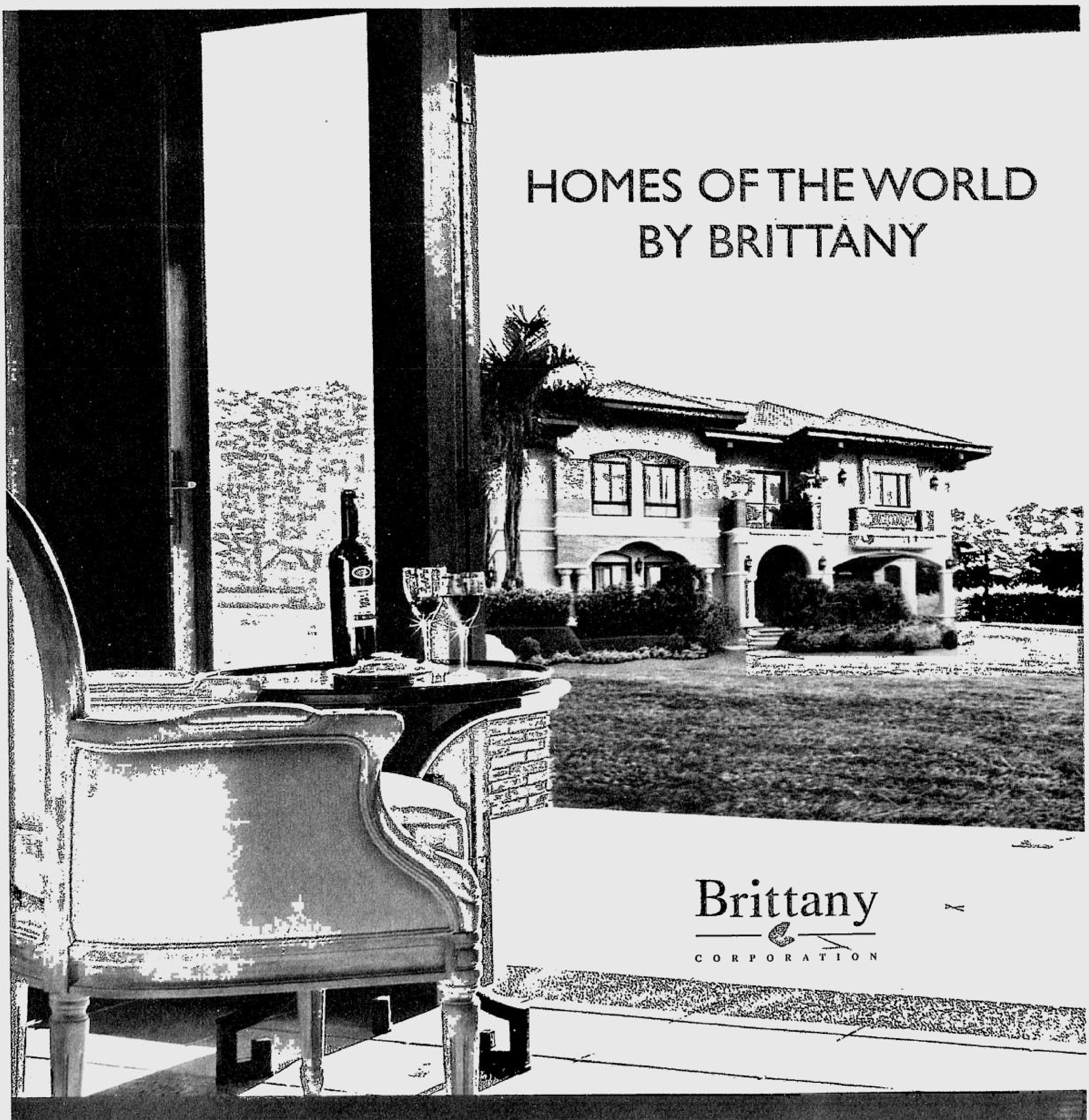
PROPERTY PREVIEW

CREATING LIFESCAPES of QUAINT MAGNIFICENCE



Take some of the world's best destinations. Take what makes them all so charming and endearing. Then put them all together to create unique lifescapes. This is the kind of thinking that moves Brittany Corporation when developing its properties.

Continued on page 2...


HOMES OF THE WORLD
BY BRITTANY
Brittany
CORPORATION

Call: 850 3084 or 850 6986 Click: www.brittany.com.ph

Continued from page 1...

Inspired by the world's finest communities, Brittany develops uniquely themed properties characterized by quaint magnificence. Concretely, this is expressed in Brittany's three flagship developments: Portofino, Crosswinds and Brittany Bay.

Portofino, Alabang

Life with a passion

Portofino gets its inspiration and its name from a charming seaport town in southern Italy. A masterpiece in the Italian tradition, Portofino takes classic Italian architectural details and applies it across the entire property. Pathways are paved with sun icon designs and flanked by colonnades. Biscuit-colored stucco homes with huge arched windows and columned porticos are straight out of cosmopolitan Italy. Portofino is the masterpiece property that's built with a passion so you can live your life with a passion.

Crosswinds, Tagaytay

Life is great

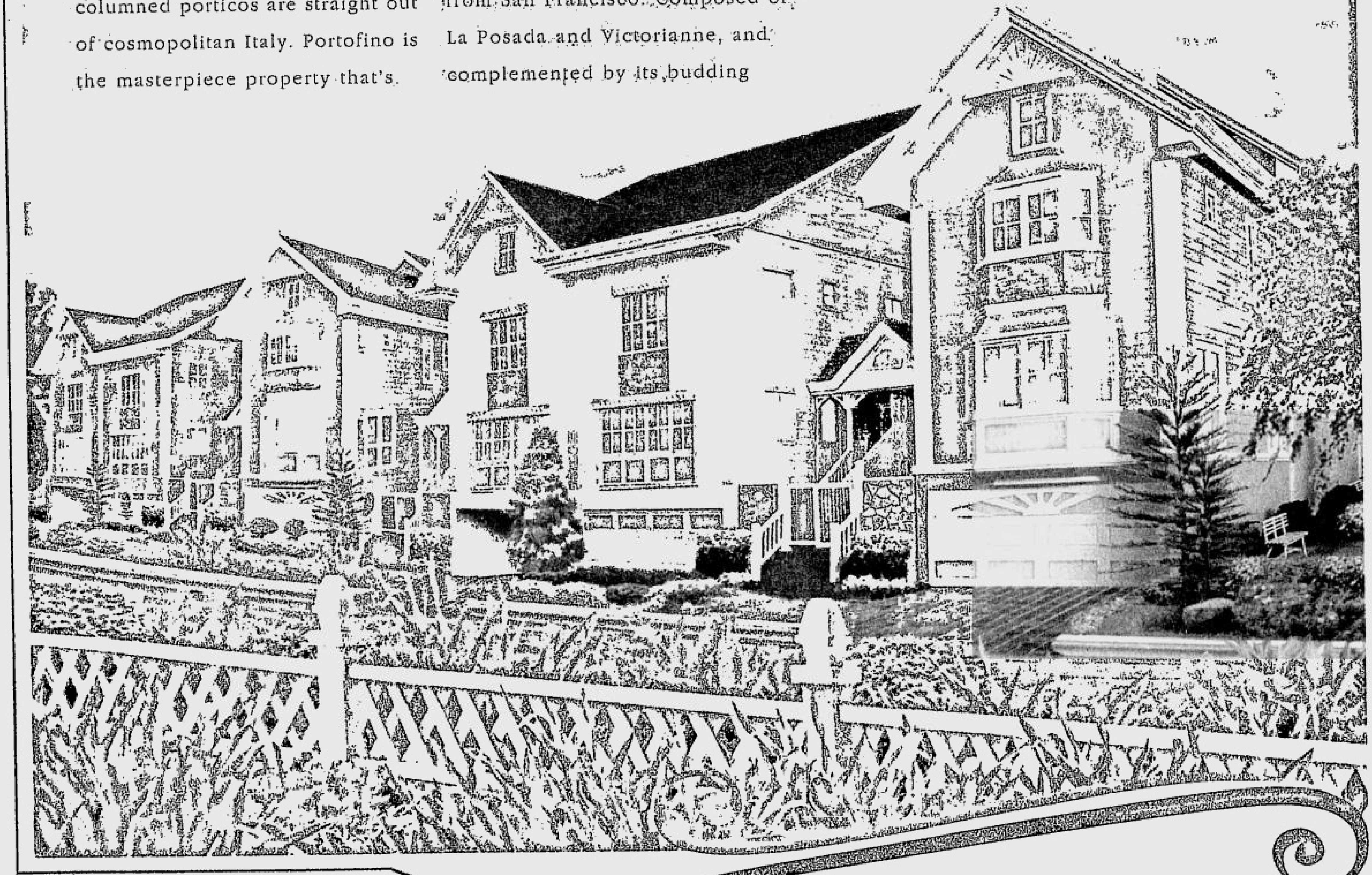
Crosswinds follows the character of the Swiss countryside. Perfect for a weekend getaway, Crosswinds embraces you with its quiet calming ambience, the refreshing scent of pine, and the crisp, cool air. The Swiss Quadrilles and the upcoming Grand Quartiers emulate classic Swiss chalets with wood patterns, overhanging eaves, asphalt shingles, stone cladding and porches. All this make life great at Crosswinds.

Brittany Bay, Sucat

Birthplace of urban renewal

Brittany Bay takes its personality from San Francisco. Composed of La Posada and Victorianne, and complemented by its budding

Inspired by the world's finest communities, Brittany develops uniquely themed properties characterized by a life of quaint magnificence.



The Real estate re-imagineers

For the people at Brittany Corporation, creating properties takes a few driving forces: vision, imagination and just as importantly, inspiration.

The company's vision is clear: become boundary breakers to better serve customers. This is obvious in the kind of people working at Brittany.

According to Ms. Jing Serrano, President of Brittany Corporation, "We have the right mix of people; people with different fields of expertise; people with imagination; people who like to try new things. This is good because we always seek out fresh ideas—to serve our customers better. And we put in a lot of personal attention and care, especially regarding customers and partners."

The inspiration, once you see the properties, is obvious. Each and every property is inspired by the finest communities of the world. As Ms. Serrano says, "When we envision or imagine our properties we generate ideas by looking closely at some of the world's destinations. Then we take what is good, what is beautiful—in both aesthetics and substance—from the world's best destinations and apply it across the development, consistently."

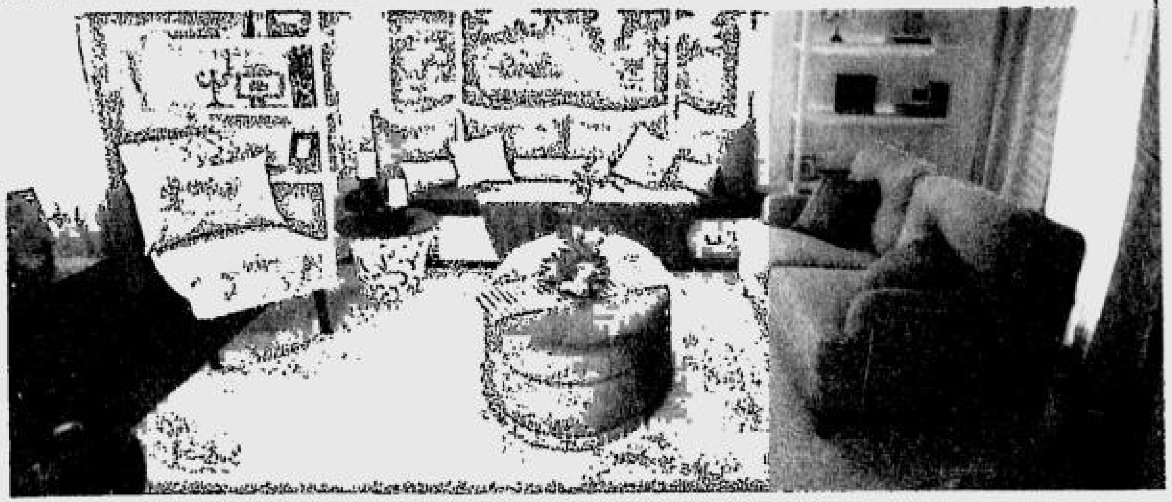
"This is what differentiates us.", adds Ms. Serrano. "And this is how we see the future will run in property development—by being real estate re-imagineers"

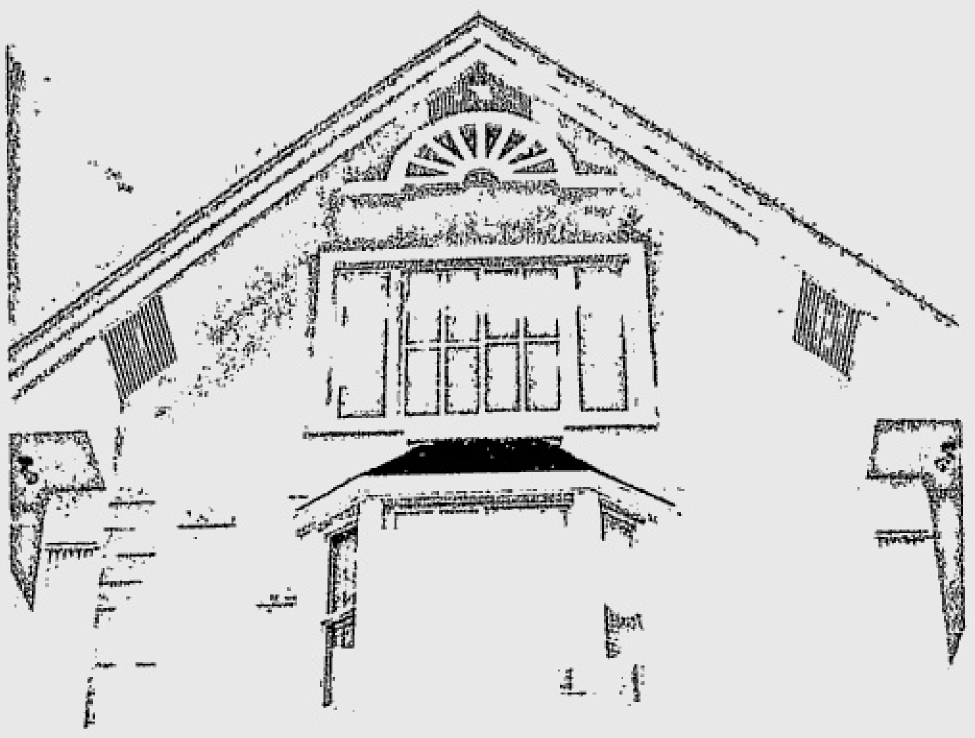
"We take what is good, what is beautiful–in both aesthetics and substance–from the world's best destinations and apply it across the development, consistently."

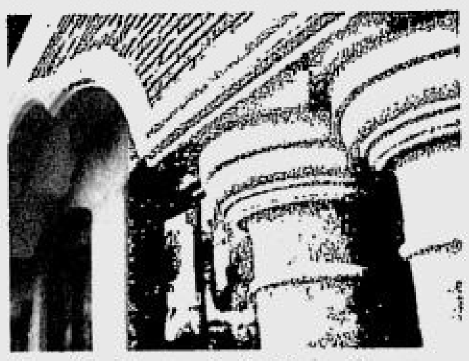
The launch of Crosswinds Grand Quartier happens this Sunday, 12 December.
Get a Property Preview, shop at the Country Finds market and more. Savor a slice of the Swiss high life.

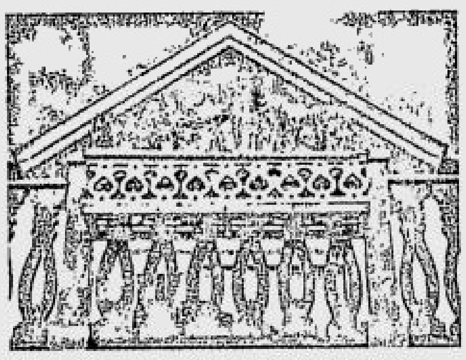
commercial area, Brittany Bay is a neo-Victorian lifescape as seen in the single family homes and the Duettos and Quadrilles. Just like in San Francisco, residential communities are interspersed with the commercial area. Hospitals, schools and business districts are close by. This makes Brittany Bay the perfect birthplace for urban renewal.

Each Brittany development is defined by what is inspiringly charming and quaint from some of the world's finest destinations. And that quality is applied throughout the entire properties.

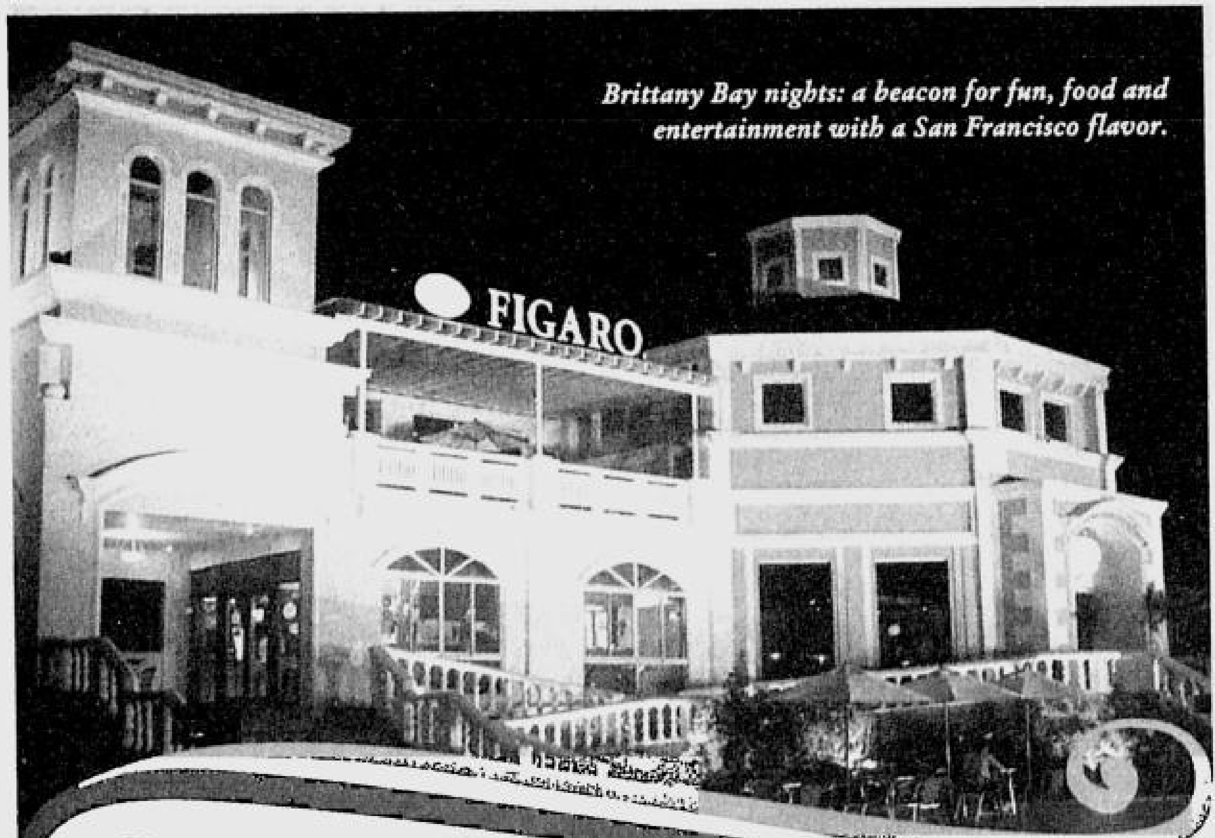

Inside the Victorianne Duetto: designed with warm, inviting colors similar to San Francisco homes.


The Victorianne Duetto's bay windows and colors are unmistakably San Francisco.


Portofino's stately Italian columns.


Swiss wood patterns at Crosswinds.

Crosswinds' large windows show a generous view of the environment and the neighboring Quadrilles.


Brittany Bay nights: a beacon for fun, food and entertainment with a San Francisco flavor.

Your kind of home,
your kind of life
can be found
in properties by
Brittany Corporation.

Helping hands:
The Partners of Brittany Corporation

Creating the lifescapes of Brittany Corporation takes more than a single hand. The company's working partners—the architects, interior designers, masterplanners and others—play a vital role in realizing the vision Brittany sets for a particular property.

"When we began working on Brittany Bay in Sucat, one of the broadstrokes we proposed in the master plan was to optimize space; not just fill it up but put in place something that would be of value to the community.", narrates Ken Quintal of DQA Design & Planning. " This was a major point that we had in common with Brittany. Put in something that people could utilize and appreciate—it's like giving something back to the community."

Architect Toti de Guzman of Architecture Network adds, "From the start, we and Brittany were of one mind. We agreed that we should design the La Posada clubhouse, the Victorianne Duettos and Quadrilles, and everything else, based on the needs of the homeowners, first and foremost."

Along with a common sense of purpose, Brittany also selects partners for their expertise. "Brittany gave us the basic direction for Portofino and Brittany Bay.", mentions Ivy and Cynthia Almario of Atelier Almario. "Then we did our research on southern Italy and on San Francisco just as Brittany did and came up with the interior design solutions that fit their themes. They trusted us for our expertise, which is good for a working relationship."

If helping hands make for light work then Brittany has its partners to make work very light and masterfully crafted indeed.

> *"This was a major point that we had in common with Brittany. Put in something that people could utilize and appreciate–give something back to the community."*

Calendar of Events

December 11-12, 2004
Portofino, Crosswinds, Brittany Bay, La Marea
Home for the Holidays
Enjoy a food fiesta tribute to balikbayans.

December 12, 2004
Crosswinds Grand Quartier Launch
Shop at leisure at the Country Finds market.

December 18-19, 2004
Portofino, Crosswinds, Brittany Bay, La Marea
O Christmas Treat!
Bring the whole family for a fun-filled day of face painting, balloon twisting, and caricature portraiture.

December 18-19, 2004
Brittany Exhibit Booth/Heaven Sent Bazaar at the Fort
See the homes of the world and schedule Property Previews.

December 18-19, 2004
Light & Sound Show at Brittany Bay, 9 p.m.
See a spectacular display of lights at the Brittany Bay commercial area.

December 19, 2004
Take your pick: indulge in **Sweets and Treats** at Brittany Bay or delight in the **Italian Cook-fest & Wine-fest** at Portofino. Or enjoy both.

December 26, 2004 to January 2, 2005
Portofino, Crosswinds, Brittany Bay, La Marea
New Year Food & Fun Festival
Treat friends and family to a delectable feast. Have a taste of Brittany's brand of hospitality.

A life more Extraordinary

Mr. & Mrs. Peng and Cecile Perez decided to live in La Posada because of the community's San Francisco theme.

Brittany homeowners share a common experience. They love the homes they live in.

In the neo-Victorian neighborhood of La Posada at Brittany Bay, Mrs. Cecille Perez, a resident, attests, "I like the San Francisco look. It's so unique. It reminds me of that movie Sweet November. And we look forward to the restaurants right nearby."

Mr. Marcos Catap, another La Posada resident concurs,

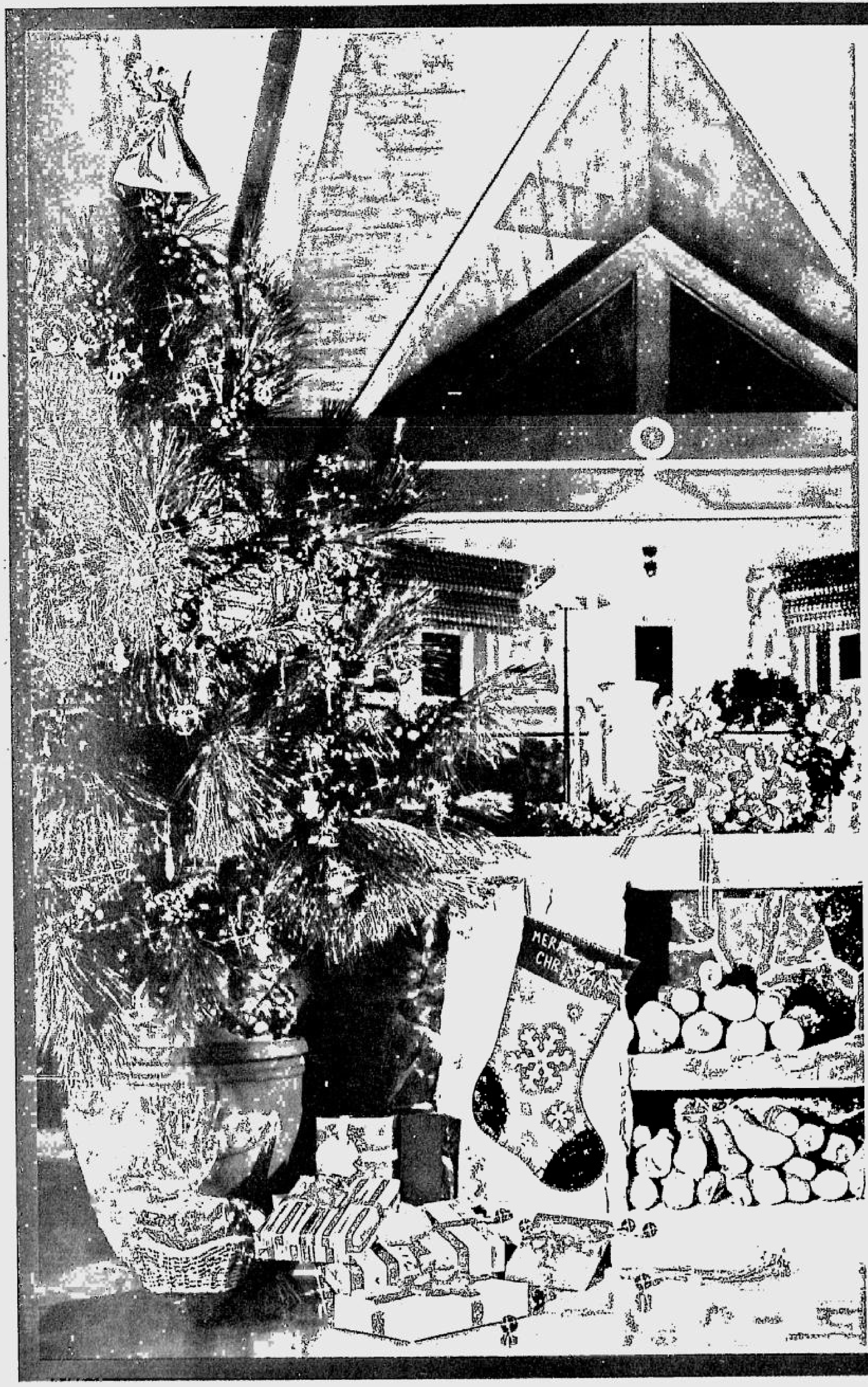
Mr. Catap's front yard at La Posada closely emulates his daughter's own garden in San Francisco.

"My daughters live in San Francisco, so we're familiar with the design and we really like it. When we moved in, the house was already made up to look like a home in San Francisco. We decided to maintain how the house looked inside and out. We just landscaped a bit but still, our home looks like my daughter's place in San Francisco."

At the Italian masterpiece property of Portofino, Mr. Rodolfo Uy says, "I like the environment. The air is fresh. Portofino is good for walking." His wife, Helena adds, "We liked the place so much we immediately bought a lot on our first visit here."

Whether it's the neo-Victorian charm of Brittany Bay or the elegant Italian masterpiece that is Portofino, or the Swiss nature of Crosswinds Brittany properties offer a life that is close to the hearts of homeowners—a life more extraordinary.

> *"I like the San Francisco look. It's so unique. It reminds me of that movie Sweet November. And we look forward to the restaurants right nearby."*



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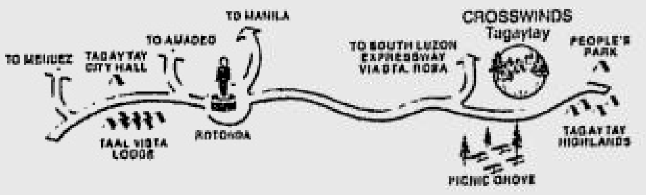

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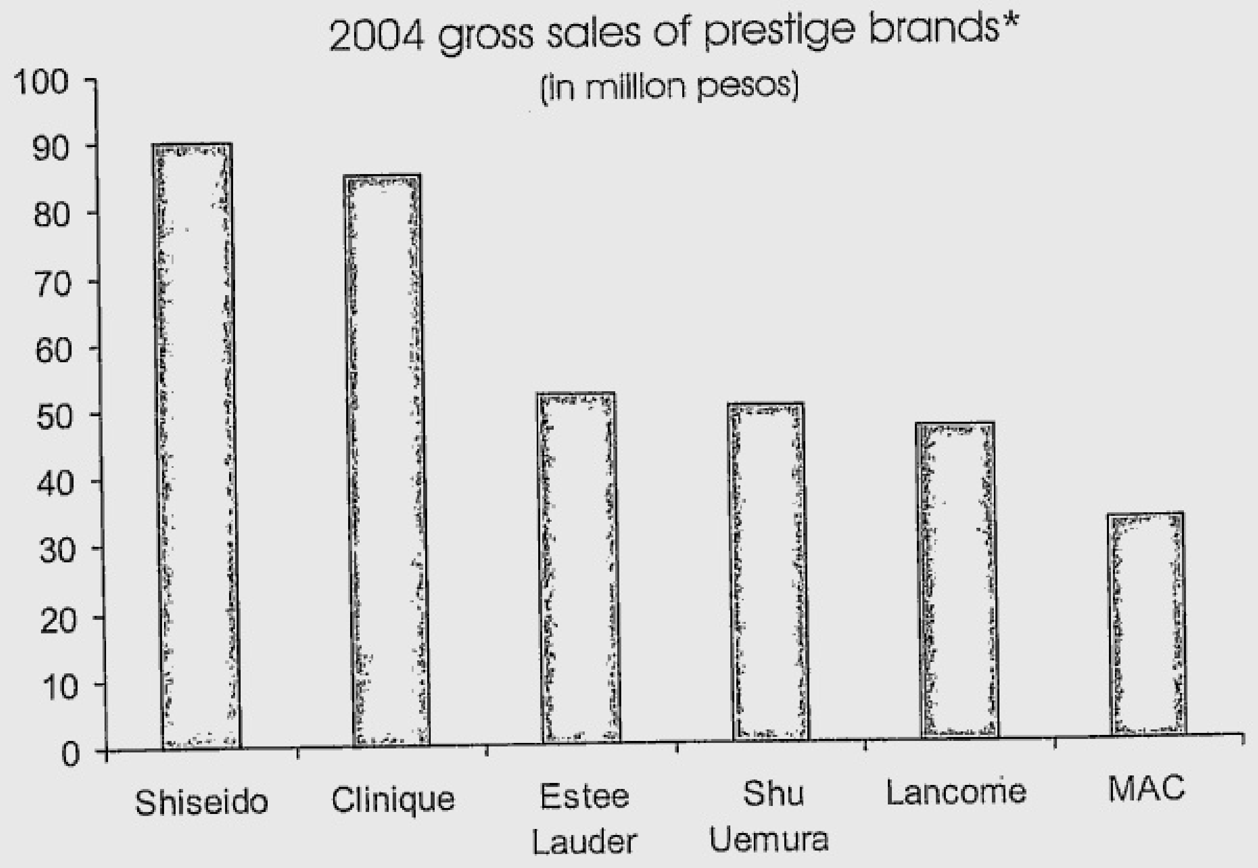
2004 gross sales of prestige brands*
(in million pesos)

*Jan.-Oct. (Actual) Nov.-Dec. (Estimated)

This business of beauty

By Marge C. Enriquez

The consumption of skin care products, cosmetics, and fragrances is a telling indicator of the economy and a reflection of our values

IF YOU don't believe that the economy posted a year-to-date growth of 6.5-percent, here are the year-to-date gross sales figures for the beauty business, particularly the "prestige brands," which marketers define as high-end beauty products sold in limited and elite shopping stores. *(See table.)*

In the local fashion and beauty business, figures are never discussed with the press. They are considered sensitive information. For an incisive story on the "rags and paint" trades, the journalist or researcher needs to go to the internal revenues office to open the books. (Our own source requested anonymity.) Filipinos, being escapist and image-conscious, would rather set their sights on new products and brand icons rather than hard-core news. It's hard to find writers who have the drive to dig up information and prove this is not a fluffy beat.

The consumption of fashion and beauty items is an indicator of the economy and a reflection of our values and how it underscores the disparity between the elite and the poor.

Most of these brands posted double-digit growth in sales turnover despite a slack economy. Over the years that I've covered the retail and luxury brands (traditionally labeled "non-essential goods"), high-end products have thrived because they cater to a recession-proof market. These brands have been bullish about product launches. During the holiday season, product launches start peaking.

What drives the sales? The imagination—the limitless fuel for a constant offering of new thrills and identity. That's what brings people to the counter. Loyalty is created through emotion as exemplified by the bond between the customer and the product. The beauty consultant (and the in-store makeup artist) is crucial in shaping that relationship.

Shiseido

Since the '90s, Shiseido has dominated the market because of a wide distribution network. Unfortunately, the first local distributor, Mondragon, was beset by financial problems, and the brand was missed in the market for a couple of years. When Luxasia Inc. took over, the company had to work from Ground Zero to make it back to the top of the heap. Shiseido grossed P90 million. Compared to last year's turnover, it grew by 30 percent.

Shiseido's unique selling point is reverence for Japanese customs and traditions. Behind every product and service at the counter is a long history. Donna Faylona, product manager for Shiseido, attributes success to the company's adherence to *omotenashi*, loosely translated as "hospitality" or "the right way of doing things."

"*Omotenashi* is an all-encompassing philosophy that permeates all our daily activities—management interaction with our beauty consultants, our beauty

THIS/K2

WHAT'S INSIDE

RICH IN THINGS

Thanks to marketing, the number of possibilities have exploded not only in affluent cultures but also in Third World aspirational lifestyles. Goods are a means of communication. ***Read more about the hottest consumer items in section L.***

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At the heart of culture

Ayala Museum may yet be our gift to the world

By Leovino Ma. Garcia
Contributor

FOR SOME time to come, you will have to see, and be seen at, the new Ayala Museum—if you want to be considered "cultured" in Metro Manila.

Declared as "a gift to the Filipino people" to highlight the 170th anniversary celebration of the Ayala Group of Companies, this world-class facility of glass and granite opened its doors to the hoi polloi or public on Oct. 1.

One can only admire the Ayala Group for putting into practice an insight long followed by cosmopolitan centers like Paris and Singapore—that culture and commerce need each other, for better or for worse. By deliberately situating the Ayala Museum in the very heart of Makati's premier commercial center, the Ayalas acknowledge the holistic nature of being human. One does not only shop or dine. One must not only take in things. One must be taken out beyond one's self, to "experience" in the real sense what it means to be fully human.

The challenge then is to convince shoppers and passersby to cross the threshold of this stunning gateway to reinvigorate their spirit, to come "dwell" in this oasis of culture. For as the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas reminds us, a "dwelling" is a place for "a recollection, a coming to oneself, a retreat home with oneself as in a land of refuge." A dwelling is a space where we can recover our strength in order to accomplish the tasks that we must do. Ayala Museum promises to be such a space.

Render RP visible

It takes as its mission the remembrance of things past and the imagination of things to come. Only a people with a memory can open a future.

Ayala Museum contributes to the promotion of what is sorely lacking today—a sense of nationhood, a pride of heritage, a confidence of identity. This it seeks to do by bringing back Philippine documents, images, and artifacts from overseas institutions to share with local audiences.

It cannot be denied that among the countries in Asia, it is our nation that suffers from a lack of self-esteem. Although eight million Filipinos make their presence felt all over the globe by dint of hard work, our art, culture and cuisine remain invisible abroad. International gains may have been made in pop music (Lea Salonga et al.), interior design (Budji Layug and the Movement of 8) and literature (if you go by Krip Yuson).

Nevertheless, international publishers hesitate to place the adjective "Filipino" on books dealing with our lifestyle, architecture, and philosophy, to name a few.

The nouveau Ayala Museum strives to preserve, interpret, and promote the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of our history, arts and cultures. It hopes to do all these in a global context by partnering with international museums. Proofs of these—the current exhibits which include the famous dioramas and boat gallery; an impressive collection of Philippine ivory art from the 16th to the 19th centuries; works of the masters Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo, and Fernando Zobel; and watercolor albums of Damian Domingo and Justiniano Asuncion; and Philippine costumes from the 18th and 19th centuries.

The latter two represent unprecedented loans from the New York Public Library, the Newberry Library in Chicago, the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, The Netherlands and the Singapore Art Museum.

Dynamic center

There is a remarkably new commitment to turn Ayala Museum into a dynamic experimental center for the arts. A museum, after all, is not a mausoleum. It is a living space. It is where the heart of life beats to a different rhythm—beyond narcissism, the care for the self, politics.

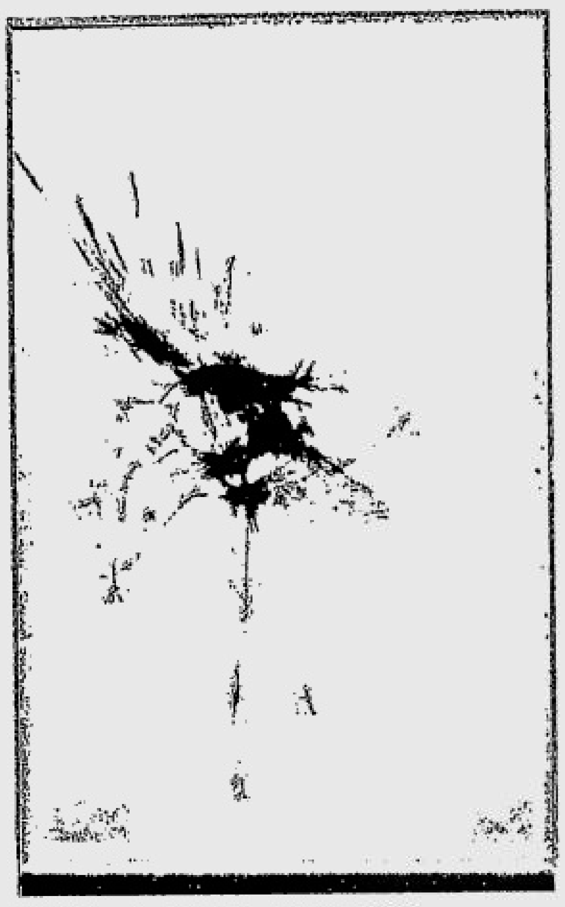
Concerts, poetry readings, plays, art performances (and may I suggest book launchings, stimulating lectures in the humanities for young professionals) are events or "happenings" to look forward to. One hopes the small exhibition space on the second floor, instead of being rented out, will be made available at no extra cost to young artists. It can be open free of charge to passersby who just may yield to the temptation of shelling out P75 to gain more self-esteem.

Except for a minor faux pas the week before (one was made to wait 30 minutes to get an official receipt for a set of catalogues, and told that the tag on an item carried the wrong price), the "experience" at Ayala Museum turned out to be a pleasurable lesson in acquiring a pride of heritage, a joy in one's identity, and a hope for the future of the nation.

Indeed, a visitor comes out of the Ayala Museum with a commitment to urgently care for the traces of our being Filipino. This will be our gift to the world.

Ayala Museum is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Regular admission fees are P350 for adults and P250 for children, students, and senior citizens. Discounted rates for Philippine residents are P150 and P75 respectively.

For inquiries, call 757 7117 to 21 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org. Email the author at lgarcia@ateneo.edu.

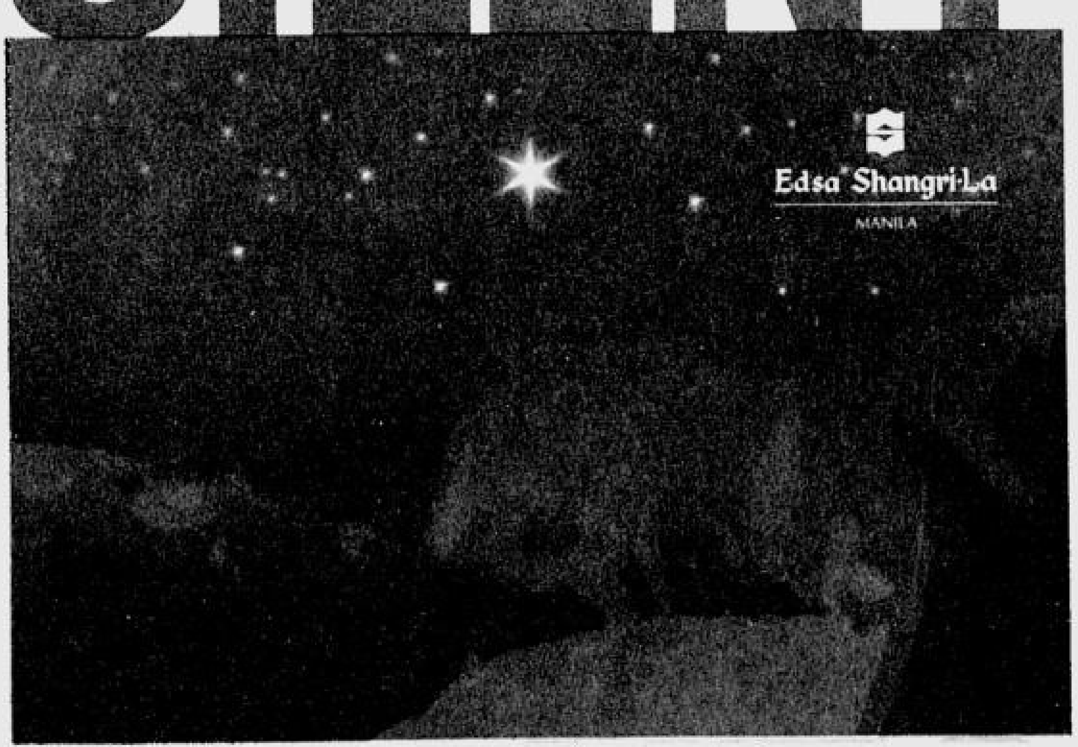


EARLY work of the late abstractionist Fernando Zobel

AT LAST, a world-class museum

DIORAMA of the Commonwealth era showing the inauguration of President Quezon

SILENT



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This business of beauty

From page J1

consultants' interaction with the customers, how we handle and present our products, product design, beauty philosophy," Faylona explains. "We have also widened our distribution—we now have a total of 14 counters and stores. We also ensure that our counters are stocked well with the correct product mix at any given time."

Next year, Luxasia is set to drum up Piéd Nus, one of Shiseido's funky but elite brands. It was introduced in Manila nearly 10 years ago by makeup guru Masa Ohtake.

Estée Lauder group

The cosmetics from the Estée Lauder Group of Companies—Clinique, Estée Lauder and MAC, have maintained their position. These are part of the cosmetics and toiletries division of Rustan's Commercial Corporation. According to Imelda Lerma, division manager of the Estée Lauder Group, Estée Lauder itself experienced a plateau while Clinique grew by 10 percent. MAC jumped by 48 percent when it opened a second counter at Rustan's Tower.

It auspiciously lured more customers to this store. At Rustan's Makati, MAC reported a 17 percent growth. The growth of the entire group, which includes Bobbi Brown, Origins, La Mer, and designer fragrances, is 15 percent.

"The longer you've been in the industry, sales growth levels. MAC is the newest (launched in 2001 in the Philippines). That's why it posted the highest growth," explains Lerma.

Since last year, MAC has been given stiff competition by Shu Uemura, a brand of L'Oréal. Only in the Philippines was this American brand upstaged by Shu Uemura. Lerma says there is no reason to butt heads since MAC offers a diverse range of products. This year, MAC was bullish.

"With MAC introducing two collections a month, customers perceived it as a dynamic brand." says Lerma.

L'Oréal group

Lancôme, the luxury brand under L'Oréal Philippines, which is distributed in four Rustan's outlets, including Cebu, is keeping mum about figures.

Shu Uemura, the new kid on the block, created a buzz in the beauty circle. Cristina Tinio, product manager, says, the Philippine operation is touted as the most successful business model in the company's entire history.

"It's the highest-ranking in the world," says Tinio. "We were lucky because we started from scratch. We didn't inherit any baggage. We built cult status out of the brand. We created desire and were able to capitalize on that. The team is very dedicated. We work 24/7."

One of their marketing tacks is having a high-profile makeup artist—Frances "Xeng" Zulueta, who also works full time.

"She doesn't have rackets like others," Tinio notes. Zulueta's employment was no fluke. To be accredited, the perspective artist must send a video to Japan showing skin-care and makeup techniques, his or her grooming, deportment and people skills. They undergo training and rigid procedures before they are acknowledged by Shu Uemura. Out of about 40 applicants worldwide, 18 pass.

Remarkably for an expensive brand, 40 percent of the customers are under 30 years old. Could it be the brand's frequent pictorials in PDI's Super! and Philippine Star's Y Style? Although media exposure helps generate interest and boost the image, the verdict is reached at the counter. And the retail experience makes for repeat visits.

"I don't want anyone to have bad experience with the brand. We just love it. It's about understanding the product and sharing the joy of being beautiful," says Tinio.

The average consumer spending is P3,500 to P5,000 for two or three products. For Shiseido, about 60 percent of the sales comes from skin care items, while 40 percent comes from cosmetics, with foundations as the top sellers. The brand's selling point is the treatment benefits of the cosmetics.

In the Estée Lauder group, lipsticks are the best sellers. Lerma adds that color items, be it eye shadow or lipstick, is always bought on impulse. It is skin care that establishes loyalty.

Lancôme's lipsticks and volumizing mascaras are the top sellers. When Shu Uemera opened at Rustan's Makati in October 2002, supply could not meet the demand. Women made a beeline for the eyelash curlers.

There was a waitlist of 500. To this day, Shu Uemura still sells an average of 400 eye lash curlers a month. Although 55 percent of the sales comes from cosmetics, 20 percent of the total business comes from the much-vaunted Cleansing Oil, the rest from the sun protector.

More than vanity

The brand managers' answers to why prestige brands thrive in tough times, were stock.

To me, it is more than a matter of vanity or putting up a pretty front as the cost of living rises. This is a phenomenon of the affluent, and the middle class that aspires to keep up with the affluent. They are hooked on the principle of non-saturation. There will never be enough colors and creams to fulfill our dreams. Personal care products serve an expressive function. Although the product's performance counts, in the long run, what matters more is what the goods say, or how the purchaser wishes to make a statement about herself or himself.

More than just denoting social status, prestige brands signal compliance to a facsimile of a Vogue, In Style or "Sex in the City" lifestyle. Like mobile phones, digital cameras, watches, cars and plasma TV, prestige cosmetic brands have become cultural statements that there is no cessation to economic expansion.

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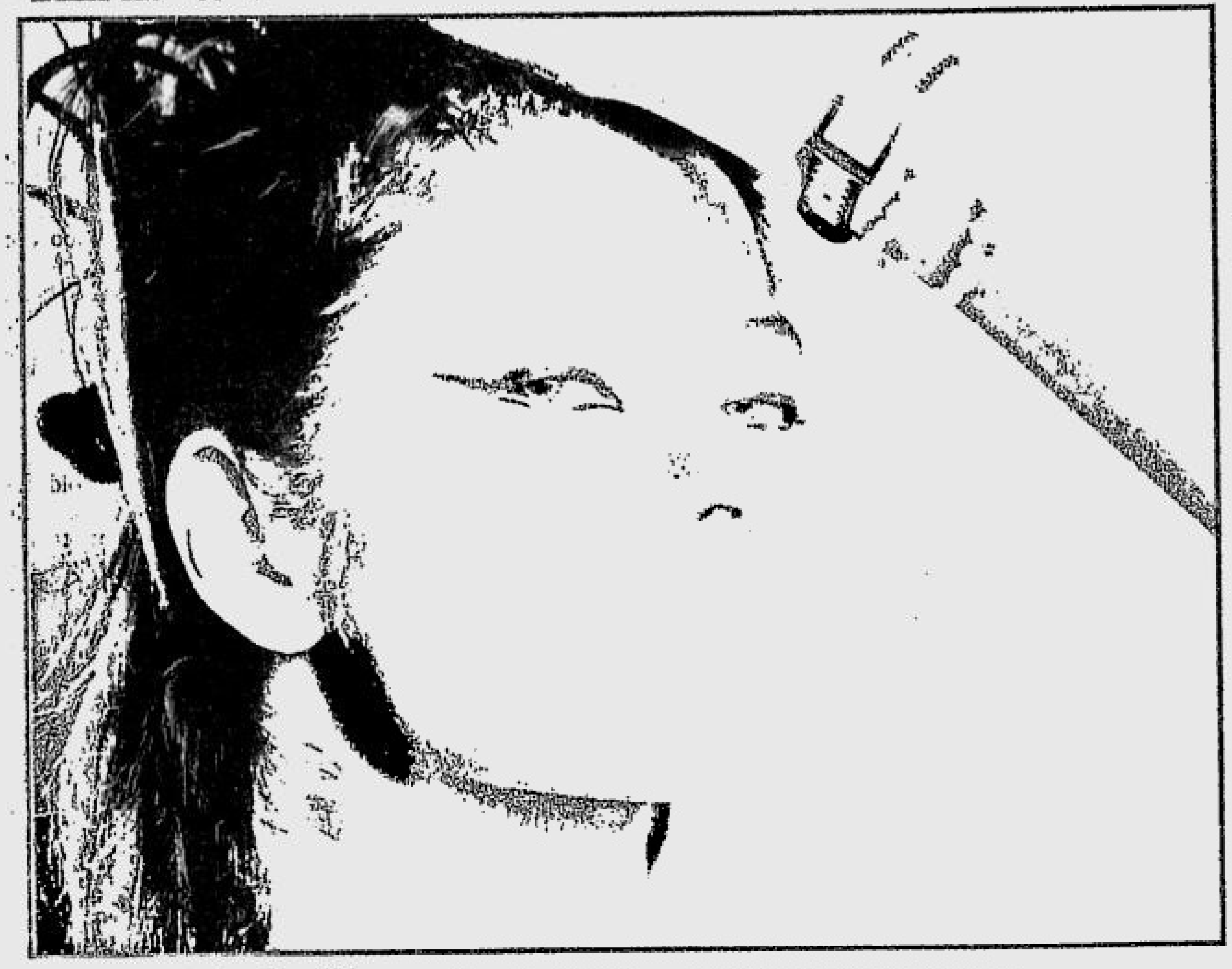


INSPIRED by Marlene Dietrich's provocative style, the Malice collection features a string of pearls with a high-fashion strap in black and white perforated leather.

Dior Watches: luxurious, glittering

IF YOU can't afford an haute couture gown, a good watch is the next best thing to a brush with the high life.

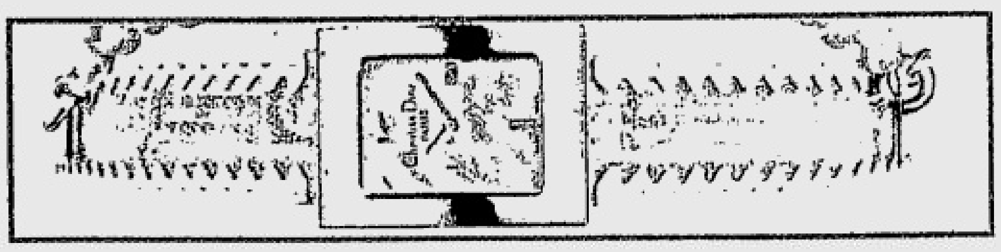
This is the pitch for Dior watches, touted as "crucial accessories" at the heart of the Christian Dior label. Brand awareness is of prime import to LVMH Watch and Jewellery Inc., which drives the marketing tack of Dior watches in Asia.

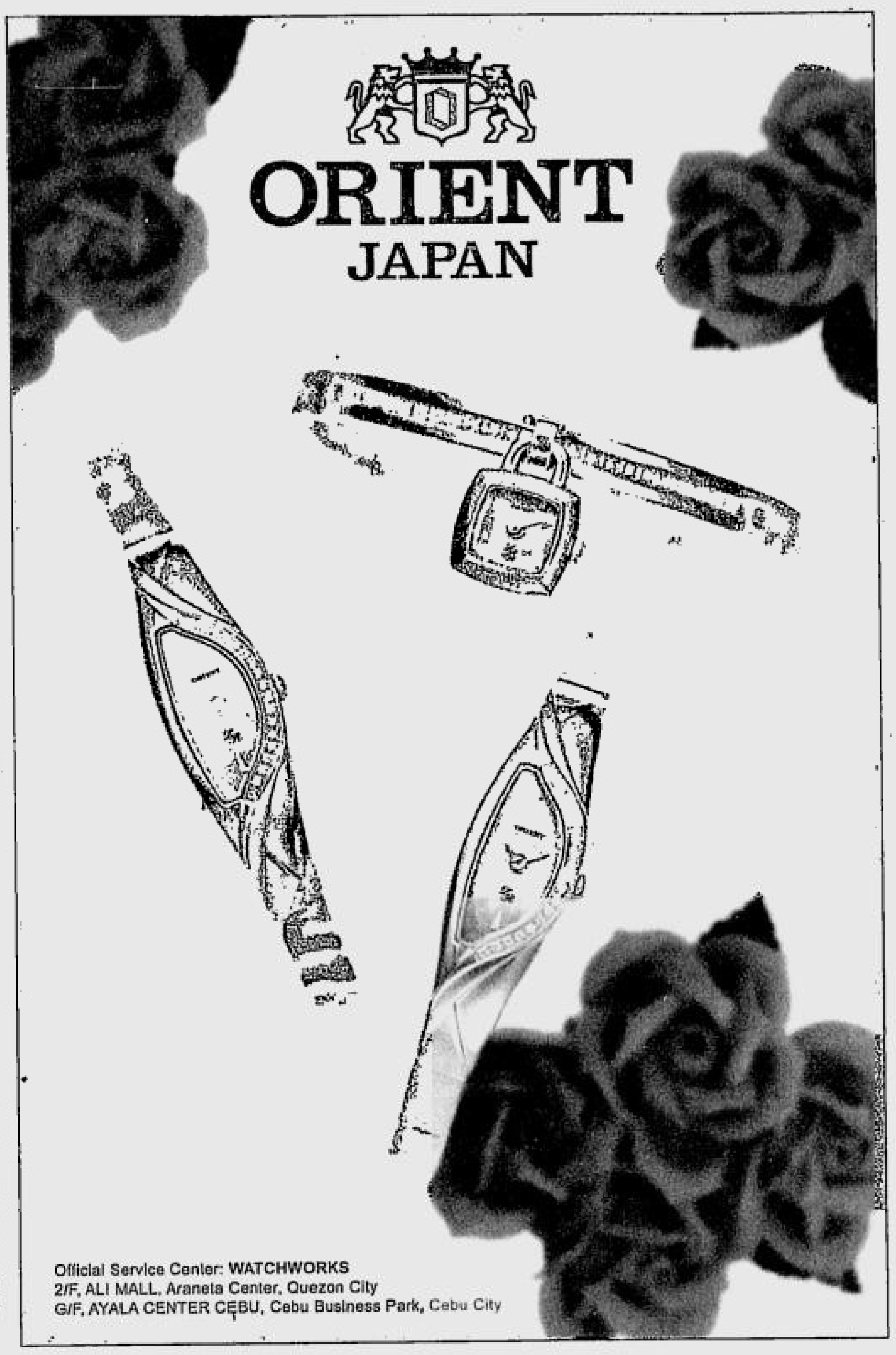
"There is no doubt that the brand is well-known," says Dominique Taieb, commercial director for Dior Watches, a division of LVMH Watch and Jewellery, Inc. "But we want the market to realize its proximity to the brand. That is how we want to enhance our presence here. From the standpoint of Christian Dior, the brand is always ahead of time, understood, refined and offers subtle elegance."

The design, says Taieb combines the expertise of fine Swiss watch making with Anglo-French sensibilities. Dior's creative director, the English-born John Galliano, and his brand studio team have supervised the creation of all the watches this season.

Hot items are the Malice collection, each in a stainless steel case that has the trademark CD Link, or black Ottoman, Trotter and Diorling straps; the Chris 47, Admit It, Dior Girly, and D'Tricks. Dior is locally distributed by Watchworks.

"Glittering and sparkling high-jewelry watches will make way for next year, plus the new aesthetically beautiful Bagheera line," says Taieb. "Christian Dior offers women access to luxury. They are the ones making the statement on their individuality. Luxury and novelty set Dior watches apart from other fashion brand of watches."





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BARTHOLOMI. Running a resort is no different from a city hotel. The staffers must make the guests happy.

FRIDAY'S beachfront is valued for its exclusivity.

THE SWIMMING pool is the focal point of the resort design.

Where life is a beach

Photos by Bobot Meru

WALKING on White Beach, you feel Boracay's fabled powdery sand under your feet, and you quiver in the cool air. A soft mist veils the coast, then the sun sets on that delicate sea, giving off muted, hazy red and orange colors. Some birds are perched on a rock, waiting for the sun to rouse thermal bubbles. The soft foam pulls wide across the beach.

This beach is special. Unlike other parts of Boracay's beachfront, there are no stray dogs or hawkers to pester you. As the foam rolls in, there is no garbage or even sea debris because this area is cleaned several times a day. There are floaters that fence off the *bancas* that are not only eyesores but also hazards to swimmers' safety.

For 22 years, Friday's, the pioneer luxury resort in the island, has maintained its impeccable reputation. To foreigners, the selling point is the Robinson Crusoe fantasy. Friday's has adapted itself to the requirements of its demanding clientele.

Native touches

The villas imitate the *bahay kubo* with thatched roof, bamboo trusses and sawali finishes. But they have Western comforts and follow the international standard of hotel service. The hotel takes these native elements and interprets them in a resort context.

Perched on the slopes are more cottages that also use indigenous materials yet have all the modern conveniences such as wireless Internet access. The resort's design interacts with the vegetation, evoking a self-contained community between the forest and the sea. Bamboo and warm woods are used for flooring, and these enhance the ambience of closeness to nature. Similarly, simple furniture, hand-woven local fabrics are used prodigiously. Tropical flowers and mosquito nets lend a romantic touch.

Although the focal point of the resort design is the swimming pool from where all the villas radiate, Friday's main attraction is the private beach. Guests lie on the divan, enjoying the uninterrupted view of the seashore. Security aides watch the beachfront discreetly.

Positive attitude

Friday's has also been commended as the most child-friendly resort on the island. General manager Philippe Bartholomi attributes this to the genuine friendliness of the staff.

"Our staffers are not just here to work; they enjoy what they're doing. When they see children, they instinctively play with them. They are very positive. In return, they earn more revenues. Guests spend more so there is a higher service charge or leave a good tip. Nobody leaves a tip if there isn't that extra one percent," he says.

> This Robinson Crusoe resort is run like any five-star operation

The Belgian national lends his Libran charm—excellent communication skills and a strong ability to work with people—in running the resort. He didn't take the route of a traditional hotelier. Batholomi was the general manager of the Manila franchise of the Playboy Club at the height of the club scene in the '80s. In the early '90s, he helped launch a unique concept—singing waiters at La Scala restaurant. When theme restaurant bars were the trend, he managed Studebaker in the Asia Pacific region. He returned to the Philippines and became general manager of the Manila Polo Club. Weary of the traffic, pollution and keeping up with city people, Bartholomi took up his present post.

"Although life here is laid-back, the demands of the business are the same," he says. He describes working with the islanders as a matter of understanding a different culture. Being conciliatory, Bartholomi can objectively see the various perspectives and determine the method to benefit both sides to get the best possible result.

Seamless

The day-to-day operation is seamless. Staffers report to the kitchen at 5 a.m. for breakfast that starts at 6 for guests who will make their early departure to their excursions. All kinds of bread prepared by the resort's bakery have been baked the night before. At sunrise, the beachfront is cleaned and by 7 a.m., it is spotless. In the resort, the maintenance crew is constantly raking the sand.

At sunset, the housekeeping staff delivers a special message and homemade Belgian truffles on fresh leaves when they turn down the beds.

The guests live a privileged life although Bartholomi says the day starts very early for them. "They go straight to the sea, then take an early breakfast. After that, they stay on the beach to get a tan or go around, indulge in water sports, scuba diving, hiking or go to Mandala spa. The lunch is usually light. They are back in the late afternoon to enjoy the sunset at the beach or cocktail at the bar. Asian guests eat their dinners very early. Westerners eat after 8."

Corporate responsibility

The job of the Boracay hotelier doesn't end with just looking at the bottom line.

Many hoteliers and owners of establishments formed the Boracay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI). It aims to preserve the environment, serve the community while being the voice of local business. Among its concerns are street lighting, waste management, sewerage and watershed reforestation to guarantee the island's freshwater supply.

As chair of the membership committee, Bartholomi screens applicants, looks for grants for environmental projects and keeps the community informed of the BCCI's activities.

"In the past months, we were able to push for garbage segregation, which led to the closure of the dumpsite. We urged our members to preserve the island by connecting to the freshwater system and island sewerage system. As more investors come in and the population keeps on growing, we have to care about our island," he says.

Boracay's high season has begun. The resort is girding for the holiday hoopla. Every December, resort employees create giant lanterns using materials that represent their department. For instance, the wine cellar staffers use corks and bottles; the kitchen makes a lantern from fruits and breads. "The Filipino ingenuity impresses the foreigners," Bartholomi says.

On Dec. 24 and 25, the resort offers its five-star menu with extensive wines stored in the temperature-controlled cellar. The sophistication of the cuisine is unmatched in the island. New Year's Eve is the most anticipated event. At the resort, the buffet stations look like a cornucopia of sinful delights and cover the beach, adorned with lanterns. Two DJs spin Latin and retro music, catering to the baby boomer market. "People over 40 form the bulk of our market on New Year's Eve," Bartholomi observes.

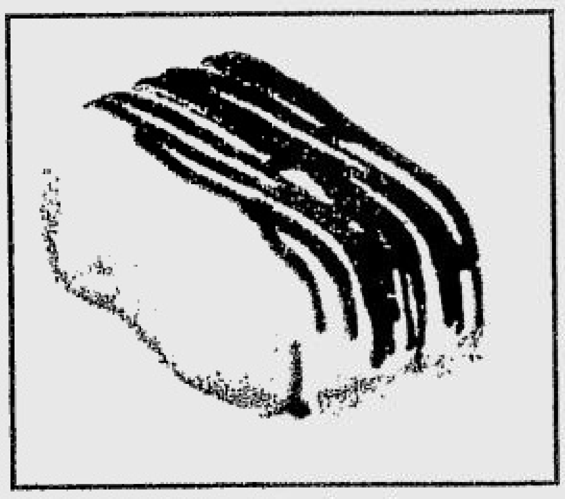
The drinks are overflowing, and by midnight, the guests get into the traditional champagne toast while enjoying the fireworks in the sky. *Marge C. Enriquez*

For details, call 810-2101 or 892-9283 or (036) 288-6200 or e-mail at info@friadysboracay.com or www.fridaysboracay.com.

Succor from sucrose, care of Leonidas

Or how to eat your chocolate and keep your waistline, too

By Meluchi A. Rivera
Contributor



ENJOY the pleasure without the guilt.

WEIGHT watchers, rejoice! For in this season of merriment and of throwing diets out the window, Belgium's Leonidas is helping ease the guilt of indulging our sweet tooth by stocking up on its sugar-free line of premium chocolate confections.

Diabetics and those on strict diets need no longer shun Leonidas' sparkling displays at Manila's select malls. They can, in fact, run to Leonidas counters for aid in seeking succor from sucrose! The "lite" chocolates use maltitol and sorbitol as sweeteners, and have 14-24 percent less calories versus "regular" chocolates. The best part is, they are still delicious and sublime.

Try Buche Praline, hazelnut praline in milk chocolate; or the dark chocolate Ganache with a hint of orange. Leonidas' top-selling variant, Manon Café, with its coffee cream filling and one whole hazelnut, also comes in a sugar-free version. These and the Olympe (orange cream), Lingot (vanilla cream), Cerise (cherry), Finesse (chocolate coin), Feuille (vanilla liqueur) and Forever (coffee butter cream) make up the sugar-free selection, which is the fastest-growing segment of Leonidas' line of chocolates.

The sugar-free chocolates are particularly popular in the Philippines, a fact that was quickly noted by Jan Van Cleemput, head of marketing for Asia at Confiserie Leonidas, during a recent visit. "As a percentage of sales, it is even more popular here than in Europe," he noted, adding that other new variants were forthcoming. Their local partner, Vanessa Figueroa, also revealed that the sugar-free line has accounted for nearly 30 percent of orders flown in every two weeks from Belgium.

New attractions

Of course, the regular bonbons are still around—more than 80 varieties! These confections, which have fans (this writer included) around the world, feature praline fillings, ganaches with fresh cream, soft caramel, marzipan, liquor, orange zest; and truffles flavored with champagne, orange liqueur, Irish coffee, amaretto, whisky, rhum café, coconut, cacao and pistachio. Leonidas' newest additions, the napolitains, are individually wrapped chocolate wafers in six flavors: orange, cinnamon, mint, feuilletine (milk chocolate with chunks of crispy biscuit), nibs (dark chocolate with biscuit chunks), and for the true chocolate aficionado, the Sao Tome (72 percent).

Still another reason to visit a Leonidas counter this holiday season is to pick up some great gifts. I can personally guarantee (having done the research for an earlier article) that Leonidas chocolates can please different palates as they come in bitter (dark chocolate), sweet (milk) and very sweet (white chocolate) variants. They can delight both a small child and the big boss. They run a low risk of being recycled!

Of course, you must first muster the willpower to actually give away these tasty morsels. Which brings us to the big risk with buying Leonidas—you may just end up giving them to yourself.

Don't trust yourself to personally purchase and deliver these luscious confections. Leonidas offers delivery service for orders of P20,000 upwards. For orders/inquiries, call 712-4171/712-2555, fax 712-0854 or email belgianchocolates@leonidas.com.ph.

TUASON. Breaking new grounds in publishing

Philippine reefs, up close

BIGEYE barracuda photographed at Apo Reef, Mindoro Occidental

SCOTT "Gutsy" Tuason works for the family firm Squires Bringham International, distributor of firearms.

He is recognized by many as one of Manila's most eligible bachelors, and a diver whose passion is capturing underwater images.

"I'm better known as a photographer than an arms dealer," says the 36-year-old artist.

Tuason has published three coffee-table books. The first was on Philippine coral reefs, which he co-authored with Rafael Cusi. "Anilao," a book on which he collaborated with Eduardo Cu-Unjieng, was cited as Best Large Format Picture Book at the 27th World Festival of Underwater Images in France. He was also commissioned by Jewelmer to do a book on Philippine South Sea pearls.

On Dec. 14 at the Peninsula Manila, Tuason will launch his fourth coffee-table book, "Bahura: A Passage Through Philippine Reefs." (*Bahura* means "reef" in Filipino.) It is a compilation of 200 images taken in the past 10 years, covering trips from sites around Lubang and Cabra off Batangas, down to Turtle Islands off Malaysia and the Philippines.

The book is self-published. When Tuason made his pitch for this project, he found out that companies were not interested in a high-end, large format coffee-table book, particularly on marine life. He bravely set up his own company, Guerrilla Publishing, got investors, and explained to them the book's potential.

Tuason is proud that "Bahura" is "100 percent Filipino effort" from concept to printing. "Bahura" is designed to interest even non-divers.

"I've been wanting to do a book on the Philippines," he says. "The Philippines is part of the epicenter of marine biodiversity, which also includes Indonesia and Malaysia. We have the largest number of species of marine life found on the planet. The international diving community never thought of the Philippines as a major diving destination. I want to showcase that aspect."

One of the country's least known attractions is the sheer number of species. "One dive spot in Anilao has 100 species of coral, compared to the whole of the Caribbean which has 60," he says.

Tuason uses a digital camera or film, depending on the situation. He favors the digicam when working in a low light situation or shooting fast-moving subjects.

"I did great white sharks during a cave dive in Mexico. The digital shots came out better than those on film," he says. But for close-ups, he points out, nothing beats the sensuality and colors of film.

"Bahura" has just touched the tip of the reefs, so to speak, in the coverage of Philippine marine life. Tuason is optimistic about the prospect of producing another volume.

For details, email photosea@pacific.net.ph.

Needles can take years off your face

By Dr. Martin Camara
Contributor

Cosmetic acupuncture not only fights aging but also boosts the immune system and can take years off your face

BEAUTY is an integral part of health and wellness. The better we feel about our looks, the healthier we are. Unfortunately, as we age, our skin loses its elasticity. The body's ability to produce collagen and circulation in the face both slow down. Wrinkles, sagging eyes, puffy or droopy eyelids and double chins are signs of this.

To recapture our youthful looks, we consider many unnatural and invasive approaches: plastic surgery, Botox, cosmetic injections, chemical peels and a host of other procedures.

Unknown to many, there is a holistic alternative to plastic surgery: cosmetic acupuncture. In fact, last Thursday, the "Today Show" featured a New York licensed acupuncturist and his patient. The patient said the procedure removed her deep furrows caused by squinting. The acupuncturist told Today host Matt Lauer that it is an effective, natural treatment that reduces signs of aging. Based on the principles of traditional Chinese medicine, it involves the insertion of fine, disposable needles into acupuncture points on the face and body.

This superficial insertion enhances circulation in the face and stimulates collagen production, filling out the lines and lending firmness to the skin for a healthy, glowing complexion.

Acupuncture has been used for thousands of years to treat many conditions and illnesses. Its effectiveness is related to the manipulation of energy points on the body to balance and remove blockages in the meridians (channels of blood and energy) in order to achieve health and prevent diseases.

A local expert, Dr. Edwin Falconi, recommends 12 treatments, scheduled twice a week for six weeks, although increased frequency is possible to achieve faster results. Each treatment takes from 45 to 60 minutes. Falconi is a medical internist-acupuncturist. He received special training in cosmetic acupuncture from Dr. Ang of Singapore.

How is it done?

A cosmetic acupuncturist uses the meridians that either end or begin at the face to stimulate and balance energy. At the same time, the procedure can treat the underlying factors that contribute to aging. Hair-thin disposable needles are embedded in the energy pathways or meridians found in specific areas on the face, ears, hands, legs and torso. This process improves the flow of qi (energy). As the movement of energy improves, more energy and blood circulate in the face—nourishing, hydrating, toning and diminishing the appearance of wrinkles.

Manipulating other acupuncture points, usually on the arms and legs, can also improve the energy flow in the internal organs. This way we are working holistically, namely on the physical appearance and the underlying factors influencing it.

Cosmetic acupuncture may take from 5 to 10 years off your face. It helps to eliminate fine lines. It can also minimize dark circles, puffy eyes, double chin, sagging skin and dropping eyelids. Other benefits:

- It relaxes muscle tone;
- It oxygenates the skin;
- It keeps acne under control;
- It nourishes the skin, for a healthy complexion;
- It increases collagen production;
- It soften scars;
- It rejuvenates.

Does it really work?

Cosmetic acupuncture has been acknowledged for thousands of years in China. It goes back as early as the Sung Dynasty (960 –1270 AD), when it was performed on the empress and the emperor's concubines. The Chinese have always postulated that beauty radiates from the inside out. If the internal body is nourished and the energy and blood are flowing smoothly, the external body will reveal such a state in the form of radiance.

Over time, this form of treatment for enrichment of one's beauty was lost. But in the 1960s, the International Acupuncture Convention in Beijing reported that patients being treated for migraine noticed a marked enhancement in their facial tone and skin. This led to a revival of the ancient approach to health and beauty.

A 1996 study in the International Journal of Clinical Acupuncture reported that of 300 cases treated with cosmetic acupuncture, 90 percent exhibited marked effects after one course of treatment (12 sessions). These effects included: the skin becoming delicate and fair, improvement of the elasticity of facial muscles, leveling of wrinkles, ruddier complexion and rejuvenation.

However, acupuncture has been known for treating conditions such as asthma, allergies, headaches and pain. In 1996 the World Health Organization came up with a list of 44 conditions that respond positively to acupuncture. For a fraction of the cost of a surgical facelift, acupuncture is definitely worth trying.

(For questions, email drmartin@intercare-centers.com)

DR. FALCONI administers cosmetic acupunture to stimulate collagen production.

Eyelash aflutter

CELEBRITY hairdresser Ricky Reyes' vanity has made him relentless in output and aspirations. If he could look good with image-enhancing discoveries, why not offer it to the market?

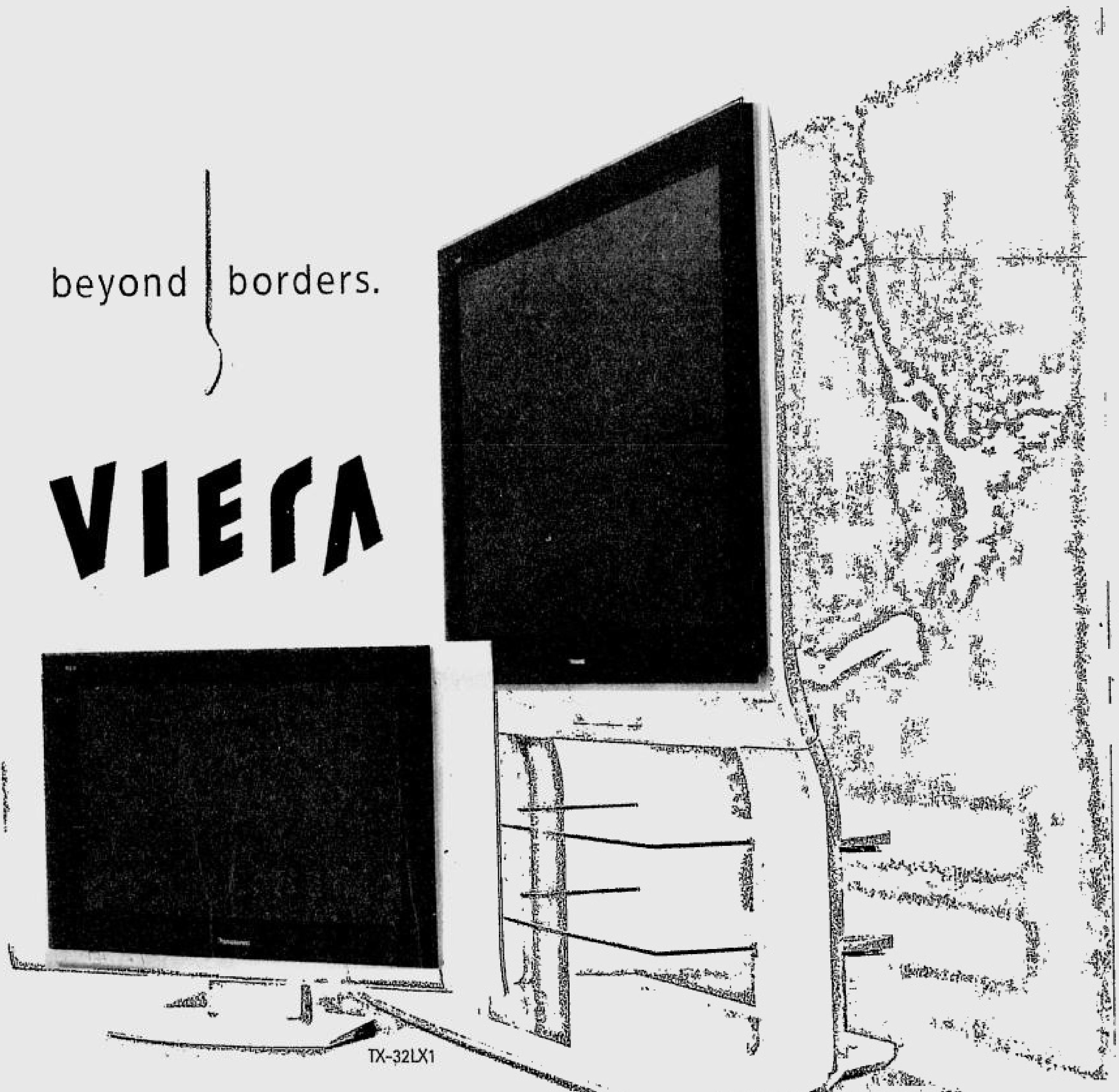
Reyes has come up with quick fixes for the hair- and eyelash-challenged. His salons now offer eyelash extension and Hair Enhancement System for men.

In time for the party season, eyelash extensions lend drama to holiday makeup.

Individual lashes, made from human hair, have been sterilized to remove the protein and make them lighter for wear. About 20 pieces of lashes in varying lengths, depending on the client's preference, are used on each eye. The treatment, worth P1,500, takes 45 minutes. The salons also provide complimentary maintenance with replenishment rates at P50 per lash.

Although a clean pate is cool, some men equate hair with virility and machismo. Reyes developed the Hair Enhancement System, a do-it-yourself kit consisting up of a setting spray and an organic fiber kit. The spray preps the balding spot for application and sets the fibers in place. The fibers attach to thinning strands to plump them up and cover the balding patches. These fibers stay in place until they are washed out.

These services are exclusively available at Ricky Reyes salons. Call hotlines 723-5440 and 721-7705.



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It's all about movement

Photos by Larry Tamondong, Pacific Light Studios
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana

AFTER a long season of stick-straight hair, loose, scattered curls are making a comeback. Slack and manipulated by the fingers, the curls are less defined, inviting to be caressed.

"Call it 'Movement,'" says Cherry Reyes, owner of the local Essensuals Toni & Guy on the salon's 2005 forecast. "When you say 'curls,' it sounds so '80s." Reyes and her team recently returned from London, where they routinely update themselves on new collections and techniques at the Toni & Guy Academy.

Reyes explains: "The Synchronized Collection is a continuation from last season—it's all about volume and texture. It's Anti-Head—wider, big hair, but not in terms of height. The style spreads horizontally. This is achieved through the cutting and styling."

Curls are still around, but they are less defined and more breezy

Basis for the cuts are a play in balanced and lopsided lines. The season's favorite is the classic, layered cut that is feminine, albeit, sexy. The others range from narrow crops to mid-length layers with textured ends and well-defined borders that add more width to the shapes. Fringes are longer, so they can also be pinned back.

"The style is more geometric and graduated. The color is a mixture or two—not too bright, to present the cut more powerfully," says guest hairdresser Olegs Stephanovs from Russia.

Complementing the expansive shapes are highlights and slicing techniques that result in various textures and create the illusion of height. Stripey, rooty, disparate highlighting takes the backseat, says Reyes. This season, colors, mostly in wine tones, intertwine. Interrelated color tones are worked internally and lightened through to the edges to soften the silhouette.

Adds creative director Nelson Cruz, "We don't even have to color the hair completely. Using different techniques, we can focus on certain areas, like the fringes or the perimeters, while the rest remain in natural shades. There's not too much color contrast."

Curling tongs are the hottest accessories of the moment. With a quick flick of the wand, one can get the look of a studied hairstyle that evokes nonchalance by the disarray of curls. Reyes says the new generation of styling tools are made of ceramic, and are therefore safer. They don't damage the hair cuticles and add shine.

Says Cruz, "Curls were flat before; now you use different rods and rollers to achieve movement."

New styling products are constantly being developed to meet the requirements of the latest trends. "In fact," notes Reyes, "styling lotion is already passé. Now we have freestyling aid."

The new products have street names. The most popular is Sea Salt Spray, which creates an evanescent effect with the drama of more density, so hair looks natural and unstylized, and yet polished. Reyes describes its effect: "It feels as if you've just come back from the beach. The hair is soft and slightly sticky, which is good for texture and diffusion, so that the hair doesn't look too set and too finished."

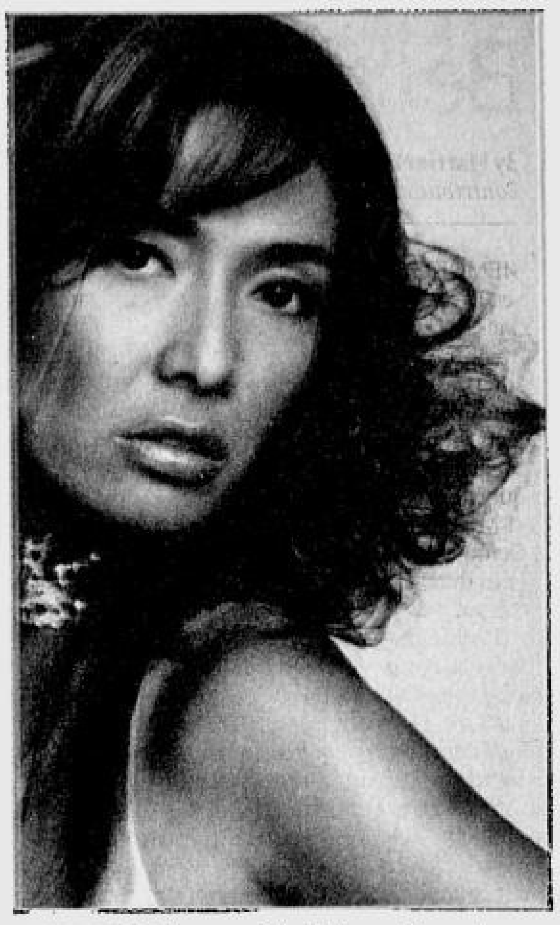
There are others—Curls That Rock, Uptight, Cat Fight, Small Talk for volume; Head Rush and Head Bangers to get that hair-raising rock star look.

Don't curls take up a lot of time, compared to the wash-and-wear convenience of rebonded hair?

For extremely busy women, Reyes says, the salon provides perming services. Or it can teach them how to create sexy curls by themselves.

"Any decision takes up time ... if you want to look gorgeous, interesting or unusual," replies Stephanovs. "Some women depend on professionals. Others like to do things on their own."

Credits: Mia's makeup: Leo Posadas
Makeup: By Terry available at My Beauty Hub, 6750 Ayala
Grooming: Nelson Cruz



THE BASIC haircut on Mia Nolasco-Cuenca is wispy, with graduated layers. Olegs Stephanovs used benders to create sexy curls. Fringes are loose and chunky, so that for an evening look, they can be pinned at the back to create quiffs.

HAPPY family. (from bottom) Cherry Reyes, Nelson Cruz, Ali Tiongson, Nelson Posadas, (seated right) guest stylist Olegs Stephanovs

'Seriously Educated Hairdressing'

VANITY NEED not be the pursuit of just the frivolous.

Entrepreneur and hairdresser Rosario Reyes turned it into an asset that not only posted profits but also developed talents.

Cherry, as she is called, remembers herself as "*maarte* (fussy)" when she was in high school, often indulging herself with hairstyling and manicures.

This inclination led her to train in a salon on Katipunan Road and learn haircutting and all the basics of salon service from her aunt who came from Budjiwara, the salon that popularized precision cutting locally in the 1970s.

Between her studies at the Ateneo—where she met her future husband and business partner, basketball player Vincent Reyes—and Miriam College, Cherry pursued her interest. In the past 20 years, she has run the franchise of a popular salon chain.

She was part of L'Oreal's pioneer technical team, which taught perming and hair coloring, both of which were very new in the country then.

Harvard of Hairdressing

Four years ago, Cherry left to further hone her craft at the Toni & Guy Academy in Central London. Dubbed the "Harvard of Hairdressing," the school not only exposed her to the exacting standards of the English; it also made her realize that the discipline and technique could result in unlimited possibilities.

However, she chose to carry the Essensuals Toni & Guy, offering full salon service at 6750 Ayala. The salon is backed up by other socially prominent investors. While the original Toni & Guy specializes in hairdressing, Essensuals offers the works—hair, skin, makeup and nails.

She says all the hairdressers and colorists were trained at Toni & Guy, so they have a uniform technique. "We all have to learn the theories which are complicated," says Cherry. "We consult the clients and find out what they want. We know step-by-step how to meet their needs."

For so long in the Philippines, customers came out of a salon wearing a cookie-cutter haircut, whichever was the trend *du jour*. One vital skill she has acquired is personalized haircutting—understanding hair texture and the way the client's hair falls, sectioning the hair according to the prospective style, lifting the hair to determine how much layering it needs. She says different effects could be achieved just by the hairdresser's body position and distance from the client because these have a bearing on the tension from pulling the locks while cutting.

Low-maintenance highlights

Hair coloring and highlighting are the most difficult services in the country. Very few salons do a commendable job of giving the clients the right color without damaging the hair. Cherry observes that the most common mishaps in hair coloring are patchy, uneven application, loud highlights, piling up another color on previously colored or bleached hair.

Alexandra "Ali" Tiongson, Essensuals technical director, can produce highlights that require less maintenance especially for working women.

"The sectioning for highlights are small," says Ali. "Plus the client doesn't have to worry about coming back to the salon in six weeks, or about regrowth. She won't see the contrast very fast."

In one year, Ali adds, a client can have new highlights thrice. "For somebody who is very busy, I will not do high-contrast highlights. If you have gray hairs, we redo the roots. It's new hair so it can take the abuse of chemicals. For highlights, we use high developers. Even if your hair is healthy, I consider the after feel. I don't want the clients to think I killed their hair. I am more into a long-term relationship than a one-time bill for the client. I always do something that we can retouch twice and we do highlights after the third visit. The retouch is every four weeks."

Tiongson can create trendy looks for such fashion-forward clients as Mia Nolasco-Cuenca, general manager of Luxasia Inc. The highlights can be sober or trendy, depending on how she parts her hair. When Mia parts it on the left, the darker sections are exposed. Parting the hair on the right reveals matte blonde.

Aside from imparting the British standards in salon services, the local Essensuals Toni & Guy has also created opportunities for budding talents. Nelson Cruz was discovered at an L'Oreal competition. Had he not met Reyes, he would still be running his salon in Pangasinan. He is now Essensuals' creative director. Not bad for "a provincial lass," he says in jest. "Toni & Guy opened doors for me like getting education and training. I realized that there was just so much to learn."

With "Seriously Educated Hairdressing" as precept, the salon offers the "Training Days," consisting of Basic and Advanced Cutting Intensives. Trainees experience the realities of being in a salon as they practice their craft at Essensuals Toni & Guy.

Interested applicants may call Angie Manabat at 812-8559 and 812-8002.

This looker is a working man

JACQUES Dupasquier is one of Manila's best-dressed men. He would look equally great with just the proverbial fig leaf, thanks to workouts at Gold's Gym. With his photographs frequently published in society pages, Dupasquier gives the impression that he is either a serial dater or a party animal.

"I have a day job," he insists. He holds a lot of directorships and corporate positions.

In real estate, he is chairman of 19-1 Realty Corp., vice chair of Bonifacio West Development Corp., director and president of Multi-Addweal Corp. and ADD Land Inc., director of Pilar Development Corp., and Metropolis Development Corporation director.

In human resources, he is chair of three companies—ADD-Force Personnel Services Inc., ADD International Services Inc., and ADD Professional Consultants Inc. He is a director of the family-owned Banco Filipino Savings & Mortgage Bank.

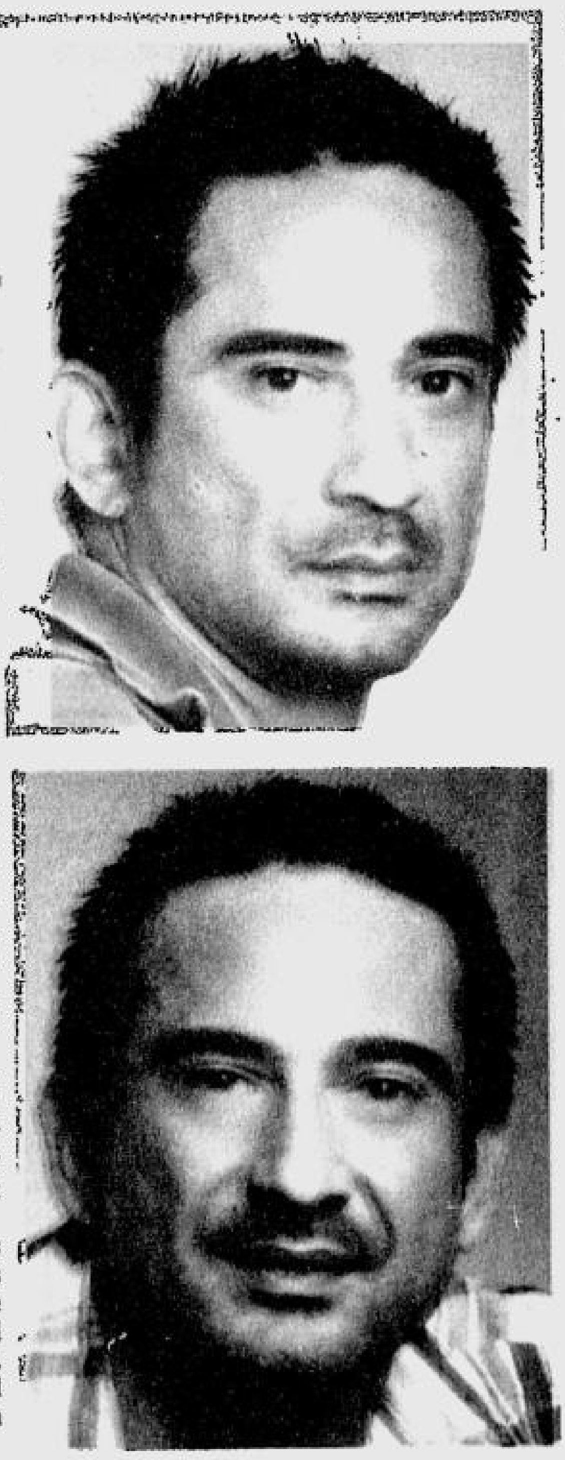
Whew!

Unlike other chairs and presidents who just play golf and travel, Dupasquier says he works hard. "My main responsibilities are attending meetings and making decisions with my partners and then delegating/distributing work. I try to do most of my 'thinking' work in the morning when my mind's at its best, like meetings, analyzing reports and making decisions. I split my afternoons between making and returning phone calls, and writing emails."

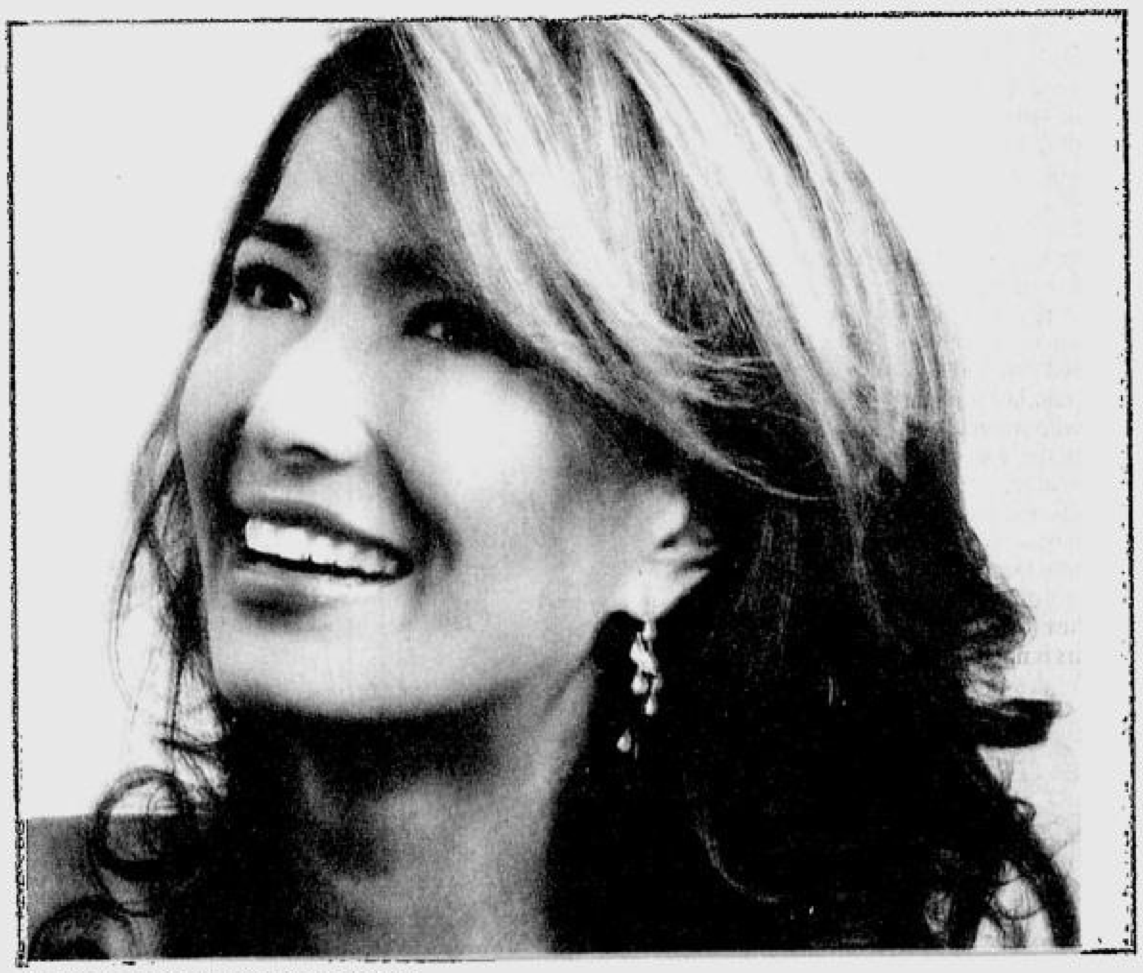
With such a busy schedule, he sports a versatile haircut that can be styled depending on his mood. "I can style it conservatively for business meetings or formal socials, sportingly during workouts, casually on weekends and a bit funkier when I go out at night," he says.

"I get my hair cut pretty often, every three weeks to be precise. That way, it more or less always looks the same, not too short nor too long. I regularly use Treat Me Right Peppermint Hair Mask from Bed Head TIGI as conditioner after every shampoo. Then I towel dry my hair a bit, apply Mastermind from Bed Head, and blow dry it before styling with Manipulator also from Bed Head."

The quintessential metrosexual? (How gays bristle at that term). Dupasquier has discussions with creative director Nelson Cruz about hairstyles to suit his image. "Nothing fussy, I'd rather say very particular. I know exactly what I want," he explains.



JACQUES Dupasquier's hairstyle is fuss-free. The textured cut radiates from the crown. It can be messed up or waved. "Don't say, 'Gel,'" says Nelson Cruz. "That's very '80s."



MIA'S bleaching took only two hours.

Busy exec trusts her hairdresser

AS GENERAL manager of Luxasia Inc., distributor of luxury skin-care products, fragrance and cosmetics, Mia Nolasco-Cuenca likens her job to that of a football coach. She considers herself lucky to have such a driven staff.

"My day-to-day activities comprise of all conceivable efforts to ensure that the company is financially healthy and that our people are happy working for Luxasia," she says. Like most energetic businesspersons, she believes that every project is a peak in her career. In 2005, the company intends to be bullish about launching new products and brands, and ensuring the team's growth.

With her busy schedule, how does Mia manage to maintain her long hair?

She replies: "I'm usually lazy about styling my hair, so I usually just tie it back in a ponytail. When I have a function to attend, my current hairstyle is so flexible I can make it big and curly, or soft and easy. I think the straight-ironed style is no longer the trend. What looks really good is hair that has a lot of waves and movement."

Every five weeks she gets a trim at Essensuals Toni & Guy salon. To keep her scalp and locks healthy, she uses the intensive treatment from the French brand, Carita. While other clients can be very fussy, Mia fully entrusts her locks to the salon's team, whom she describes as sincere and knowledgeable in their craft. "They will not try anything outdated on you and will ensure that the new hairstyle they will suggest suits your personality and lifestyle."

Becoming 'baby-wais'

By Harriet Ann Dy
Contributor

MEMORIES of my anxiety as a bumbling, insecure and guilt-ridden first-time mom came back in full force as I cleared my Hotmail mailbox on a recent weekend. There, squashed between hundreds of old missives, were emails to and from girlfriends on subjects like "motherhood rant," "questions re breastfeeding, help" and "more mommy questions."

My daughter Renee turned a year old last October, and while I've Enjoyed being a mother in the last few months, it hasn't always been this way.

It didn't help that my husband and I were initially ambivalent about being parents. Our idea of having a lifestyle change was trading his old Corolla for a spanking new black Honda CRV. Just enough room for the stroller and his golf clubs, he chortled gleefully.

Finally, we thought that two years of living as DINKs (Double Income, No Kids) should have given us enough time to become full-fledged adults. Still, while most couple devoured pre-natal literature, we read up on Parents' magazine ratings on best baby strollers and matched up our favorite baby names.

In any case, we dutifully signed up for pre-natal classes and banned our favorite sashimi dishes from the dinner table. He stopped cooking roasted pepper soup when I told him it made me nauseous. Eventually, he held my hand when I wobbled during our walks at the park. And despite his arguments otherwise, I told him I was getting an epidural at the first opportunity.

Familiar refrain

Nothing could numb the nightmare caused by sleepless nights breastfeeding and pacifying a newborn. I had naively thought that a wave of maternal instinct would engulf me after giving birth. Instead, I found myself panicking at the sight of a hungry baby having trouble latching on to my swollen glands. After many desperate visits to the lactation consultant and even more frantic emails to girlfriends in my e-group, I finally got into the rhythm of what I had thought to be a natural, post-natal progression.

Ignorance and naiveté turned out to be a familiar refrain in my first six months of motherhood. It didn't help that I gave birth in Toronto, Canada, thousands of miles away from the immediate wisdom of the nearest *lola*, *tita* and sister-in-law. My mother and two favorite aunts flew in to help, but all I could remember of that time was dreading the day they would leave. And so like what Sandra Tsing-Loh, The Atlantic Monthly writer and new mother herself, described as "a generation of women who cooked with the car keys," I found solace in babycenter.com and "What to Expect in the First Year."

Magic counsel

In an email six weeks post-partum, my sister-in-law sent the magic words: "On Becoming Babywise." This is actually a controversial baby-care tome that involves putting baby on a "feed, wake, sleep schedule." What makes some baby-care experts skeptical about it is that it involves letting baby cry on her own for a period of time, not unlike "Ferberizing" her. (US-based baby sleep expert Dr. Richard Ferber is actually one of the more popular proponents of the CIO or Cry It Out method. His popularity can be measured by the fact that he has become a verb.)

Understand that if you're a housebound-mom like me with dishes to do and laundry to fold, nothing sounds better than having baby on a regular schedule. I've long realized that when folks in Manila talk about a *yaya*-deprived existence in the West, it's about not having another pair of eyes and hands to leave baby with when you want to take a shower or answer the phone. I honestly thought I'd never survive not having someone else with me full-time in the first few months. My younger sister, who was taking some courses part-time, was a godsend, and my husband tried to come home early from work.

Just the same, breastfeeding every three hours is not for the fainthearted. The only good thing was being able to catch "Law and Order" reruns at midnight. But as other 21st century urban moms warned, this stage, too, came to pass, and I became a more confident parent.

New book list

After "Babywise," my thirst for parenting literature surged, and my reading list included books like "The Bitch in the House: 26 Women Tell the Truth about Sex, Solitude, Marriage and Motherhood" by Cathi Hanauer, and "Raising America" by Ann Hulbert. I also perused what Salon.com describes as "pregnancy porn" lit—you know, how Gwyneth Paltrow still looks fabulous after giving birth to Apple or how Kate Hudson lost a gazillion pounds in just two months!

Suddenly, moms my age are worrying, not just about whether baby is on the 95th percentile growth chart, but also if we can lose the baby weight sooner than if we laid an egg. And look great in our tank tops and low-rises while we push baby in a $700-Bugaboo Frog pram besides. I knew I was a member of the Gen-X parenting sorority when I found myself checking out Gymboree and Pottery Barn Kids stores first on those rare mall trips.

I was also spending afternoons at the neighborhood play center listening to "A Smooth Road to London Town," comparing notes with other young moms and actually enjoying it. At the center, I had become "Renee's mom" first and "Harriet" second when I was introducing myself to other moms. I was becoming exactly the kind of woman I had vowed before my childless friends I would not become: the kind whose favorite topic is her child. Thirteen months later, Renee is still my favorite subject, and I think she will be for a very long while.

Familiar tug

More than parenting 24/7 though, I've been feeling a familiar pull whenever I see a computer or a newspaper byline. I had been totally unprepared for life as a stay-at-home mom (SAHM) in the beginning and went through a difficult stage when I resented not being able to find the time to check my email even. I more than made up for this professional withdrawal by borrowing tons of books at the library and reading The New York Times online religiously. I craved non-domestic stimuli and relished it where I could find it: rare dinners with friends and my precious bedside reading. I spent most part of the day going to the park with Maxine, another SAHM, and Cindy, who has three kids.

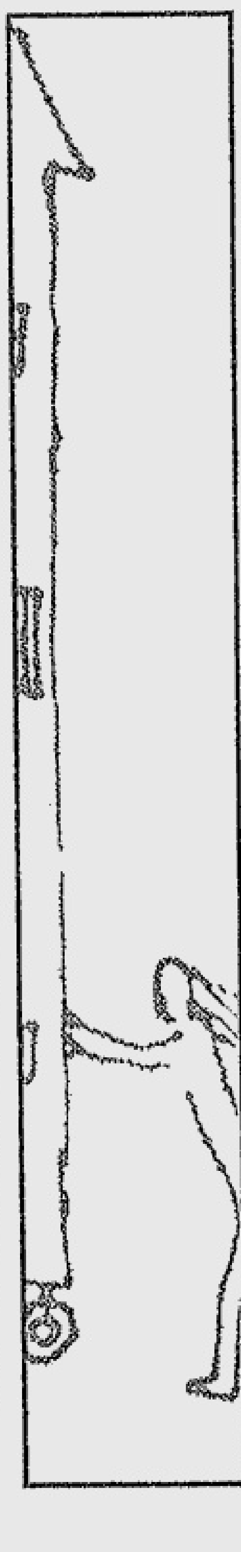
Since I am on an extended working holiday here in Manila and have had the luxury of hiring a topnotch *yaya*, I have found time to do some freelance writing and editing. However, it is ironic that, now that I have some time on my own, I find myself wanting to go home early and cutting short working trips just to be with Renee.

Some women welcome domesticity with open arms. Others get blissful at the very thought of motherhood. For me, motherhood just crept up one diaper at a time. Knowing that Renee is growing up to be a happy and confident child makes my domestic adventure worth every midnight change.

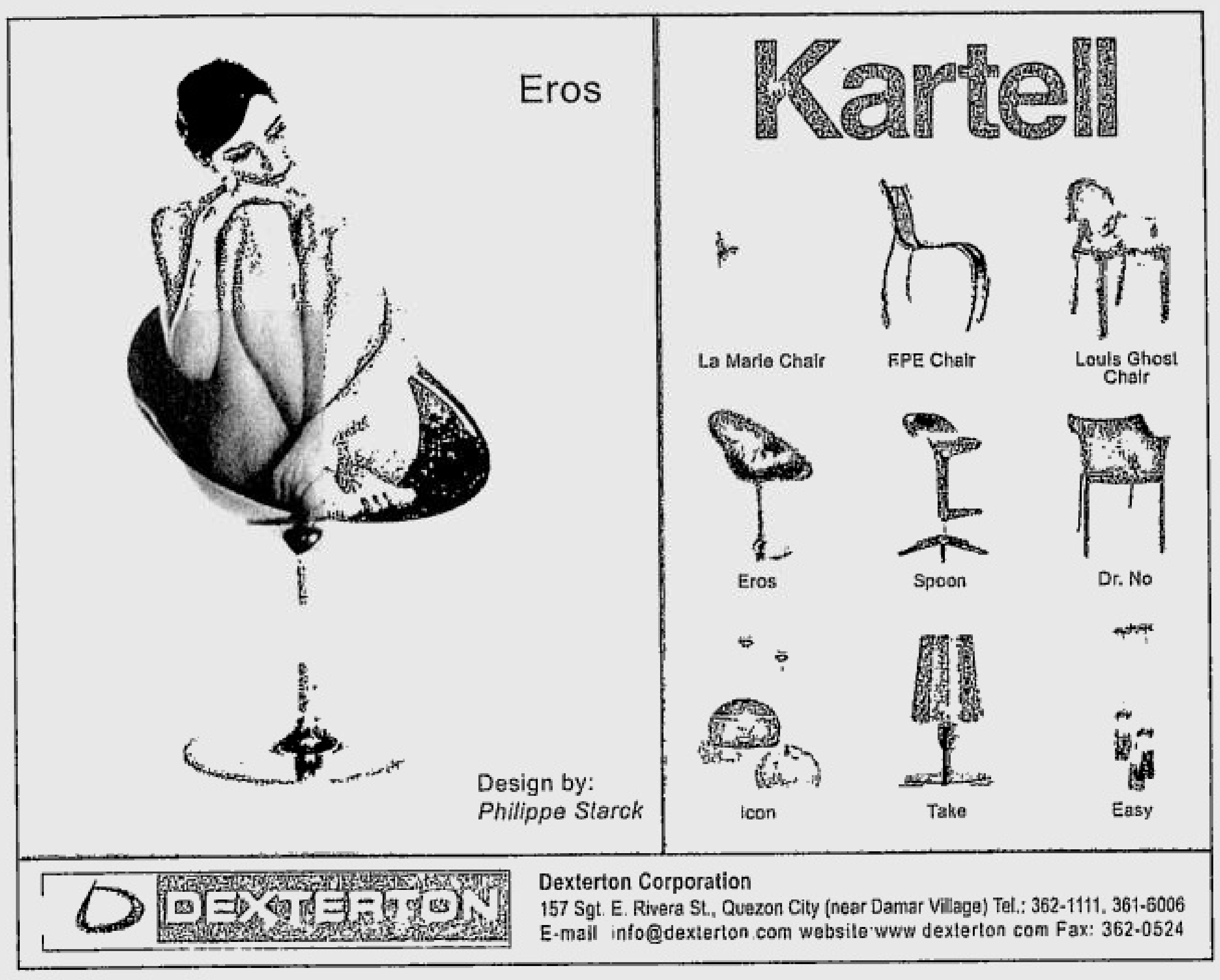
Now that she's older, I know I'll be grappling with the work-life balance soon. But that's another email rant.

Email the author at chinachix@gmail.com.

> While some women welcome motherhood with open arms, it crept up on me one diaper at a time



FLORID STATEMENT
"Flowers are a coquettish accent and soften any look," says shoe designer Lila Almario. She makes a lizard skin fabric bag with gold chain with silk flower, ballet slippers in baby calf skin with leather rosette and velvet mules. Available at Lila Almario boutique at Glorietta 4



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- Up to 60 minutes of Movie Recording
- Changeable 12-colour clock display

In the stylish world of compact digital cameras, Digital IXUS has once again set the trend in both form and function. Sheathed inside its sleek metallic body, is the powerful DIGIC II imaging processor which delivers the most stunning pictures. In addition, the superior Canon UA Lens (Ultra High Refractive Index Aspherical Lens) reduces colour dispersion to ensure sharp, brilliant and true colours. Despite its slimmer and more compact frame, the straight collapsible mount lens system ensures top optical performance for high image quality always. Take your pick from two cool designer looks and make the ultimate fashion statement now with the new IXUS 40/30.

POWERED BY DIGIC II
PictBridge

Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc.
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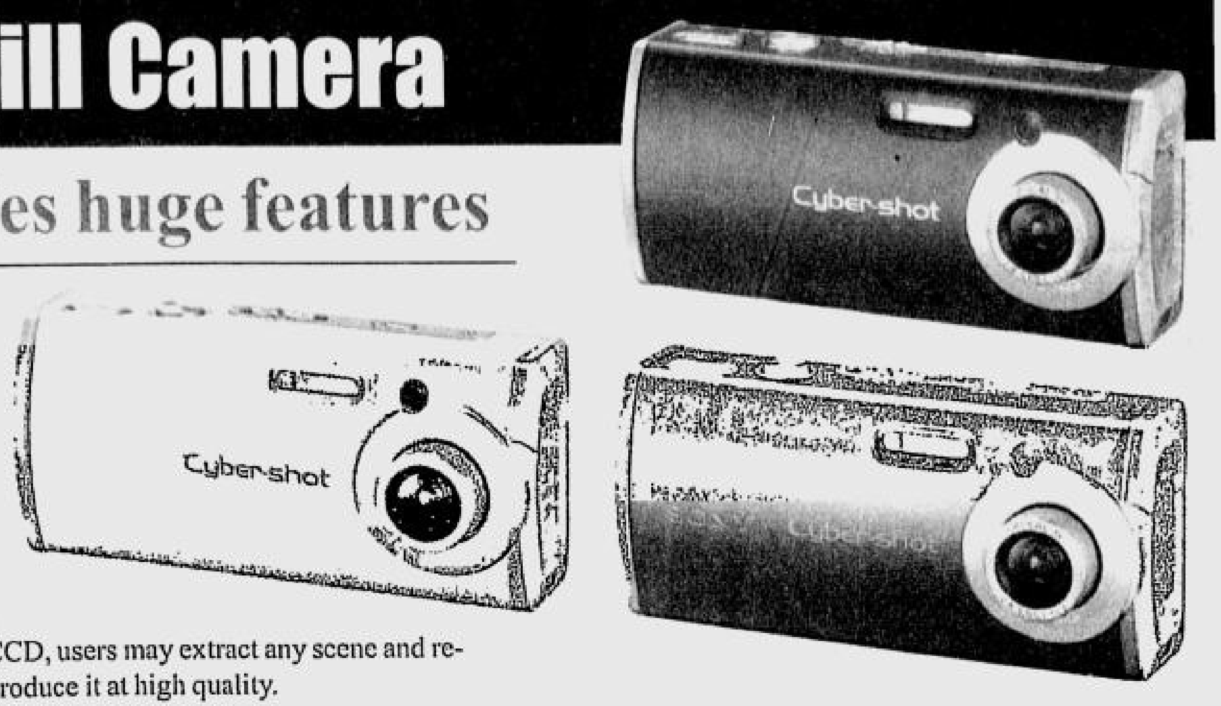
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Sony Pioneers with World-First Compact 7.2 Megapixel Digital Still Camera

Cyber-shot P150's small size belies huge features



Sony Philippines has made even greater things come in small packages. The smart and stylish Cyber-shot P150, which can capture 7.2 effective megapixels, allows for 300dpi 8" x 10" large size prints. Coupled with a powerful Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar 3x optical zoom lens, the Cyber-shot P150 shoots near-professional quality images in a package small enough to fit into shirt pockets or small handbags.

Get Creative

The Cybershot P150's higher resolution means more detail and more possibilities for tight cropping to create a photo within a photo. Be it a specific face in a crowd, a bride's dazzling smile at a wedding, or a child's first steps in the background of a family reunion shot, the Cyber-shot P150 makes it happen. With the 7.2 megapixel super enhanced HAD CCD, users may extract any scene and reproduce it at high quality.

Furthermore, the Sony Cyber-shot P150 is the perfect everyday companion. Whatever the subject, every photo will be at near-professional quality. For travelers, this camera is the ultimate photographic partner. Whether it's a full day excursion through the attractions of Paris, or a day's long train ride across rural China, the Real Imaging Processor and enhanced InfoLithium battery ensure that users won't have to sacrifice any picture for battery life.

The Cyber-shot P150's start-up time of 1.3 seconds ensures that users never miss a spontaneous photo opportunity. Add that to a shutter lag of only 0.3 seconds and shutter intervals of 0.01 seconds, images such as a baby's sudden burst of joy will be easily captured for posterity.

Is That a Camera in Your Pocket?

At just over 2.5 cm thin (108mm x 51.5mm x 26.6mm), the Cyber-shot P150 still manages to offer a sizeable 1.8-inch viewing screen. But its tiny form belies the true power of the camera.

At the heart of the Cyber-shot P150 is the Real Imaging Processor, a technology unique to Sony. With this engine driving every shot, colours come out richer, images come out sharper, and picture quality is enhanced all round. The proprietary technology also boosts start-up times and shot-to-shot times as well as decreasing shutter lag. Better yet, Sony's Real Imaging Processor takes full advantage of battery life boosting performance 90 percent greater than previous models, allowing for 320* high quality images per charge.

Easy to Shoot, Easy to Save

Onboard connectivity falls in line with Sony's usual cross-platform compatibility. The Cyber-shot P150 includes support for Sony Memory Stick and Memory Stick PRO, Hi-speed USB 2.0 and also a newer version of the PictBridge interface for printing photos directly to a compatible printer without the need for a computer.

This versatile model also boasts nine preset scene selection modes to shoot in any condition. Whether shooting the muted colours of twilight, images under harsh glare at the beach, or the vibrant colours of fireworks, there is an appropriate scene selection mode. For more creative types that demand more control, the Cyber-shot P150 offers a manual exposure mode. In its video mode, it can record high-resolution video using MPEG Movie VX Fine, which captures 640 x 480 movies at 30fps -- large enough to be played back on a full screen TV.

Options Galore

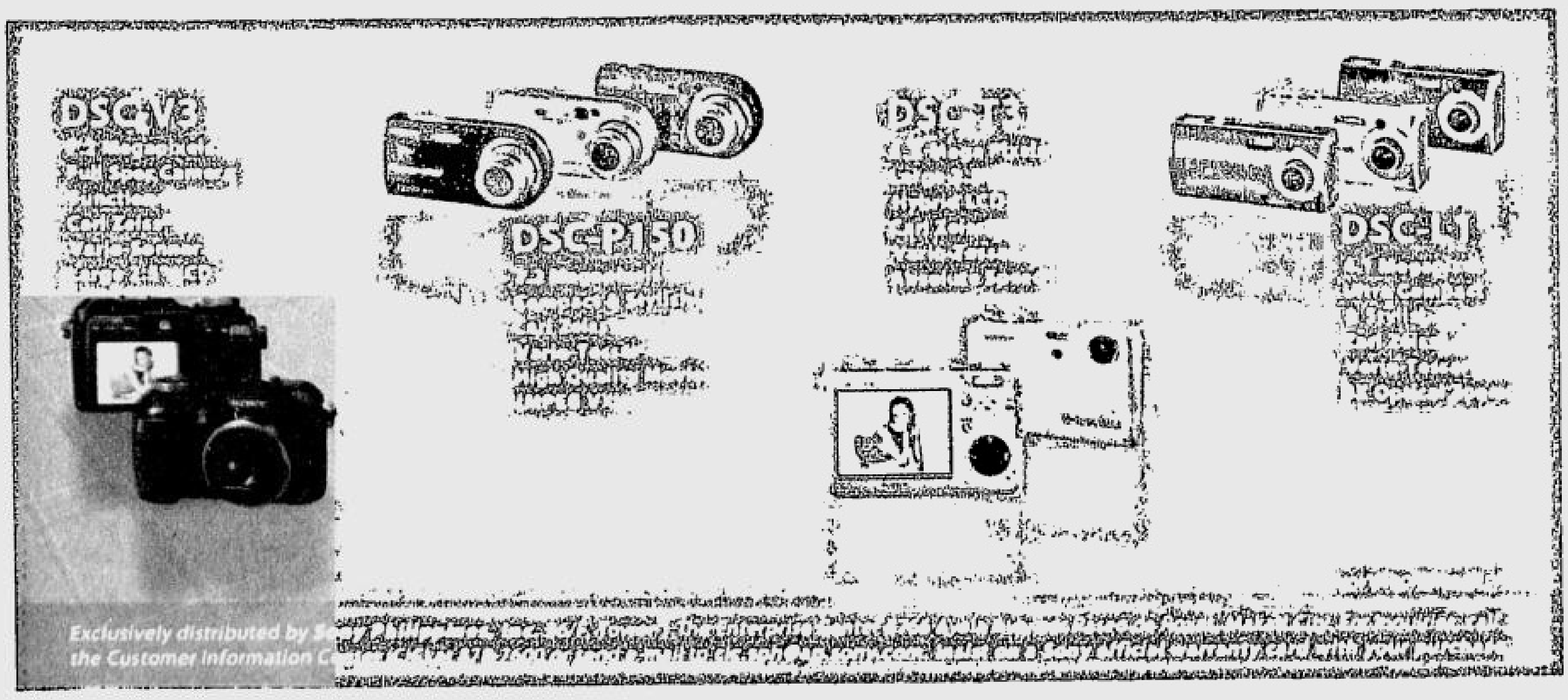
The Cyber-shot P150 benefits from compatibility with the Cyber-shot station. This docking cradle, with USB 2.0, printer and AV connectivity, allows the battery to recharge while the camera plays back slideshows on a TV, prints photos via PictBridge, or transfers images to a computer. The Cyber-shot station even includes a remote control to toggle between images, print, or play movies.

The optional Cyber-shot marine pack, MPK-PHB, is a must-have for any underwater enthusiast. Whether snorkeling or diving to a depth of up to 40 metres, the marine pack empowers the Cyber-shot P150 user to capture images of the underwater world.

The Cyber-shot P150 can also be used with optional telephoto and wide-angle conversion lenses and has a tripod mount for long exposures. Also available is a soft all-leather carrying-case that slings around the shoulder or wraps around the waist.

ADVT

SONY
Cyber-shot
PICK YOUR PARTNER IN FUN.
Great Picture Quality
High Speed
Power Efficiency
STAMINA
Real Imaging Processor
ZEISS
Non-Carl Zeiss Lens
Carl Zeiss Lens



ÉLAN

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For the soundtrack of our lives

By Cherish Garcia Hernandez
Contributor

CAN you imagine a movie without a soundtrack? Titanic won't be the same without Celine Dion belting out "My Heart Will Go On" while the characters Jack and Rose stretch out their arms against the backdrop of an orange sunset. Ah, the cheesiness of it all and the guilty pleasure we derive from viewing that scene.

Now imagine your life with a continuous soundtrack. There's Edwin Collins' "Never Met a Girl Like You" as you get dressed a la Demi Moore in "Charlie's Angels Full Throttle." Or the hypnotic sound of the band Air as you watch traffic go by, making you feel like you're in a Sofia Coppola film. That's what having an iPod is like—being in the movie of your life with a soundtrack to match your moods.

Digital music players were already available in the market when Apple introduced the iPod in October 2001. No one expected it to sell for several reasons: the market reception to its precursors was lukewarm at best; you needed to have a Mac computer to use it; and it was pricier than most MP3 players.

> Like the mobile, the iPod might be the next necessity

Heir to Walkman's throne

But with the iPod's stylish design, ease of use and capacity to hold a huge amount of songs, it became an instant success. The reason first generation MP3 players failed to make the digital music revolution happen the way the iPod did is because aside from being complicated to use, they employed memory cards which could hold only 50 songs of decent quality. The iPod took the MP3 player a step further by using a hard disc for memory that made it possible to store thousands of songs. With the introduction of the Mac/PC-compatible iPod and the more affordable iPod mini, Apple took digital music to the fore.

The iPod is the heir to the Sony Walkman's throne. The Walkman changed the way we listened to music 25 years ago. The iPod is doing the same thing today. Users have the power to control an audible environment whether in a bank, an airplane or on the beach. What is mind-boggling is the iPod's ability to carry one's entire music collection everywhere.

When compact discs replaced bulky cassette tapes, people thought they were godsend. Now even CD carriers are becoming passé. With the iPod, one's music can actually fit in a device the size of a cigarette case. The impact cannot be dismissed. Aside from being able to transfer all of one's CDs into the iPod, downloaded music can be stored as well. Ahead of the game, Apple introduced the iTunes music store which offers affordable, legal downloads and it now has 70 percent of the market share. Peer-to-peer download sites like Limewire and Kazaa are alternative sources of music as well. (These were not closed down like Napster because they have no central directory and were considered legal, though the issue is still being debated).

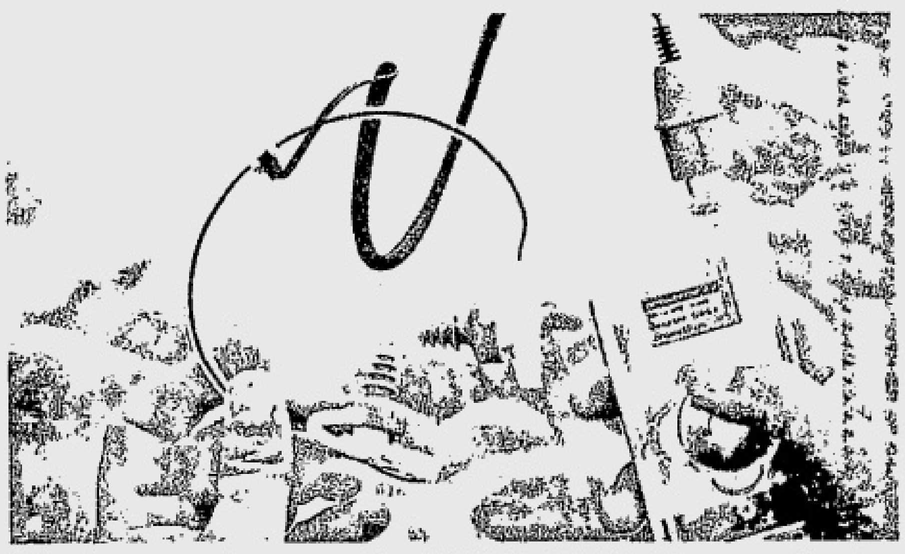
What are the implications? In the near future the "album" as we know it might become obsolete with music being sold online on a track-by-track basis, ushering in the return of the single as our parents knew them. Who knows? Even CDs might be done away with eventually.

Implications

The success of the iPod has created a growing market centered on the device. Companies like Hewlett-Packard, Bose and BMW are introducing iPod-related features on their products, acknowledging its status as a cultural icon. It is so ahead of the competition in its case of use and sleek design that it has become a technology ecosystem supporting many companies that make all kinds of clever accessories.

Though the iPod is more commonly seen in big cities like London or New York, it is slowly becoming an indispensable part of everyday life the way the cellular phone is. According to Newsweek, "iPods not only give constant access to an entire collection of songs and CDs but membership into an implicit society that's transforming the way music will be consumed in the future."

Even celebrities are praising the iPod. Will Smith calls it the "gadget of the Century." Gwyneth Paltrow gushes about it in Vogue. Chris Rock says he has two iPods: one for storing music and one for storing his comedy sketches.



AN APPLE Mini iPod is seen encased in a H2O Audio SV-iMini, a fully waterproof housing and headphone set made for the digital music player. The unit looks great and allows for full use of the iPod mini's controls.
AP

The fashion world is also catching iPod fever. Karl Lagerfeld owns no less that 60 iPods (coded for easy referencing). He has paid tribute to the device by designing a $1,500 pink Fendi purse that can hold up to 12 iPods. Gucci, Coach, Kate Spade, Louis Vuitton and other brands all have iPod cases in their line.

The club scene has not been spared. In New York City, some clubs have iPod nights wherein everybody gets a chance to be a DJ by plugging in their iPod. In London, an even more extreme form called mobile clubbing is catching on. These are events organized over the Internet wherein people meet at a certain place with their iPods and dance to their selected tunes.

These developments may sound a little too radical and bizarre, but the bottom line is, the iPod is reaching icon status. Even its secondary features are starting to come into play. Audio books are being downloaded and loaded into the iPod. The latest iPod upgrade, which users regard with both dread and delight, comes with a color screen for viewing pictures. Apple hopes to do for digital photos what it did for digital music.

The great marketing ploy is the introduction of the black U2 limited edition iPod. This was launched with a performance from an übercool band, reiterating the iPod's intention of being the coolest digital music player on the planet.

With competitors struggling to come up with new products to rival the iPod, it is inevitable that digital music players will become more affordable and enter the mainstream. The iPod has changed lives. It has added color to long commutes and has even provided some anti-social people with an opportunity to ignore the world around them.

Wonders on the wall

Maybe a year from now, Plasma TV will be as commonplace as the once-elusive flat screens

THOUGH hanging a TV on the living room wall seems like a great idea, it has yet to be the norm, given the prohibitive prices of Plasma television sets. Even in a big-screen "super-size" era, most people would hesitate to spend half a million pesos on one, even if they had the disposable income.

However, strolling in the mall recently, I noticed that there seemed to be a sudden surge of these desirable TVs with a significant price drop. Who knows? Maybe a year from now, they will become as commonplace as the once-elusive flat screen types.

Know your TV

For most people, the lure of these ultra-modern Plasmas is the coolness of the flat panel look rather than picture quality. Few know the difference between a plasma display and LCD screen, and picture tube television.

The Plasma has a grid of hundreds of thousands of cells filled with xenon and neon gas plasma. An electrical charge illuminates colored fluorescent phosphors, creating an image. Because of the difficulty in producing very small grinds, plasma sets can be produced cost-efficiently only in larger screen sizes.

LCD or liquid crystal display utilizes liquid crystals that are sandwiched between pieces of glass. An electrical charge twists the crystals to block light or allow it to pass through the screen. LCD TVs do not display motion as crisply as plasma sets and have a more limited viewing angle.

Subtle differences

To be honest, the difference in quality is so subtle; it would matter only to the most fastidious person. This reiterates the design factor being the main motivational force for wanting these next- generation television sets. The advent of the DVD (not the yucky pirated ones with people's heads and audible laughter) has made home entertainment much more pleasurable than the Betamax days of yore, so that it seems very plausible to want to take home viewing to the next level. On the other hand, ordinary television remains the same in terms of picture quality, that is until HDTV or high definition TV becomes mainstream.

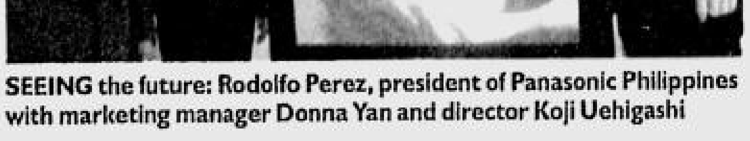
Recently, Panasonic introduced its new line of Viera flat panel TVs consisting of 50-, 42-, and 37-inch Plasma units and 32- and 26- inch LCD TVs. I checked them out at Abenson Avant in Greenbelt 4 and suddenly found my first generation flat-screen TV (the big fat ones) inadequate. But how could I not compare these beauties!

The pearl silver finish and black screen framing make the images literally jump out of the screen. According to Panasonic, the Viera's Real Black Drive System makes for richer blacks, and a Full-Digital Processor for ultra-precise processing of all video signals to minimize generation loss. The Viera also has an HD Panel with Bounded Cell Structure that vividly reproduces the tiniest details of images.

Amazing pictures

Frankly, this is all Greek to me, but bottomline is, picture quality is amazing. And the sound! Even if the speakers can hardly be seen at 16mm wide, the Smart Sound

WONDERS/ K2



SEEING the future: Rodolfo Perez, president of Panasonic Philippines with marketing manager Donna Yan and director Koji Uehigashi

CHARRIOL
GENEVE

Flower
ROMANCE

St. Tropez Flower Collection
Rosy Times in France

Naming after one of the most famous resorts along the Mediterranean coast, the newly launched St. Tropez Flower collection takes us to the French Riviera - well known for its flowers and perfume.

With the delicate harmony of cut pink, blue or green gemstones encircling mother-of-pearl dials in a variety of matching hues, the St. Tropez Flower exhibits an air of freshness and vividness, complements perfectly with the spring and summer attires.

The collection also comes in a full set of necklaces, bangles and rings in matching style. The jewelry is adorned with flower-shaped silver attachments studded with precious gems.

Hello, Gorgeous!

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

SONY Ericsson, the company that introduced phones like the T610, the P900 and my beloved k700i, has added another sublime handset to its already impressive collection—the s700i.

I get nervous every time the company turns out a new phone that I can road test. New models have a way of making me feel my current one is no longer good enough. After excitedly opening the familiar green box, I'm filled with apprehension as I transfer my sim card because I know this is the beginning of another vicious cycle of "phone withdrawal symptom." Let me explain.

I tell myself that I have to figure out the newcomer's features quickly and start working so that I can get back to my own phone quickly and painlessly and avoid wanting something I don't immediately need. Then I look for all the things I don't like about the new phone.

It turns out that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the s700i, and I end up totally enamored. Being one of the very first mortals to handle it, I am complimented by people around me during the road test. Now, I hold my breath as I wait for the fateful day when it is taken away from me.

I feel disloyal to my k700i, which is loaded with amazing features. I told myself earlier it would be the last phone I would buy in a while. But the gorgeous s700i has everything the k700i has; and then some. For all of you who are wondering, the "i" stands for phones destined for the international market (anything out of North America).

Unique features

What sets the s700i apart is its unique swivel action. This adds a new dimension to the sexy modern look of the phone. The keypad is hidden to make the phone look like an actual digital camera when closed. (It has a striking resemblance to the Sony cyber shot cameras). But this swivel form factor makes it slightly bulkier than phones like the k700i. At 132 grams, it is definitely not heavy.

The 1.3 mega pixel camera is protected behind a sliding mechanism that is activated by sliding a switch. As soon as the lens opens, you can take pictures immediately. No more complicated menu chooser options. I find that this feature makes me use the camera more than I do with other camera phones. It is almost as if there is a phone hidden inside a camera and not the other way around.

> The s700i is the latest proof that Sony Ericsson is dedicated to producing quality handsets

Among the camera's many settings are: night mode, self-timer, assist light, white balance, spot metering, camera auto power-off timeout. The choice of photo sizes varies: 1280 x 960, 640 x 480, 320 x 240 or 160 x 120. There are effects, too, like sepia, black and white, negative and solarize. You can have so much fun using the frame templates for your photos.

For me, the best camera feature by far is the burst 4 setting. You can set your camera to take a series of consecutive shots, the outcome of which makes me feel like an amateur photographer-cum-Andy Warhol wannabe. It is great to always have a camera with you, and I'm not talking about the half decent cameras that are an afterthought to most phones nowadays.

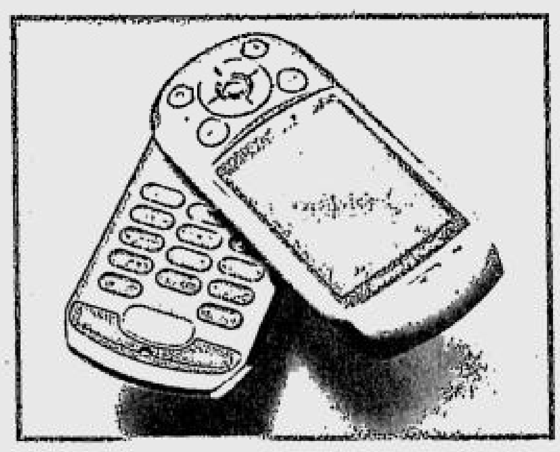
In short, the s700i has a good camera that produces good photos.

Ultra-sleek

Aside from the usual functions that are the standard of most phones today (Tri-band, GPRS, Bluetooth, Infrared, 40 voice polyphonic ring tone, downloadable themes and games, etc.), the s700i also has video capabilities, a good MP3 player and a stunning 2.3-inch, 262K color TFT display with 240 x 230 pixel resolution. Trust me, this is a big beautiful screen. It also comes with a 32MB memory stick card with its largest duo card capacity coming in at 128 MB, just like the P900.

The interface of the s700i is like that of the k700i, but it has no clock or screen saver available. The possible reason for this is that the power consumption cost may be too great with such a large screen. As far as battery life is concerned, it is excellent with 167 hours of standby time (that's almost a week) and 5.5 hours of talk time, a big improvement from the k700i's battery life. Note that this battery life is without any camera use. The camera is a real battery drainer.

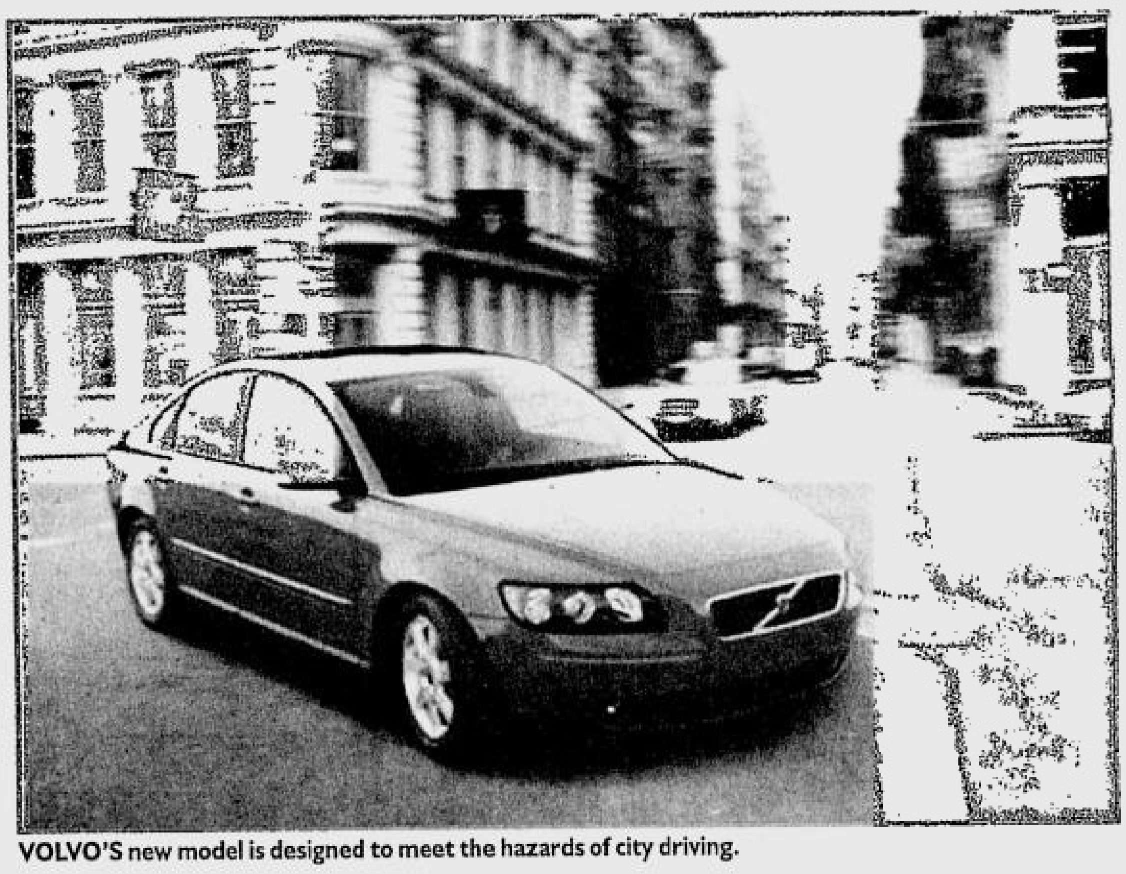
There is a great lock slider on the side that lets you lock and unlock all the buttons of the phone in a single, quick action. Sony Ericsson continues to make its phones more user friendly by doing away with all the complicated steps on a main menu. The rubber flap at the bottom that you have to remove when charging is an improvement over the k700i's flap, but it is something I would rather not have. Of course, I'm just nitpicking. The recessed keypad takes some getting used to when sending text messages, especially after the elevated keypad of other phones.


SONY Ericsson's s700i has been touted as the best camera phone among the present batch for its clarity.

I'm usually wary of gadgets with lots of moving parts, and I have to say that the swivel function scared me a bit. But after a week of use, the spinner hinge seems stable and strong, although I wonder why it can only open one way. You open by turning clockwise and close by turning counter-clockwise.

As always, Sony Ericsson has shown that it is dedicated to producing quality handsets for a discerning market.

Email the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com.


VOLVO'S new model is designed to meet the hazards of city driving.

Luvvv this Volvo!

By Josemari Ugarte
Contributor

WHEN I was asked to test-drive the dashing new Volvo S40 compact and dispense a few spirited remarks on the experience, I snapped up the chance. "Hand me the keys!" I demanded.

At first I thought I would get to drive the SUV, so I planned several high-speed off-road trips to Batangas and other locales like Subic Bay, to join a celebrity-spiked hobie Regatta. Or I said I could go up to Baguio and Sagada to pick up some delicacies.

But when I went to the Volvo showroom on Pasong Tamo Extension in Makati to pick up the car, I was told that I was getting the artful new compact model—which was an entirely different thrill altogether, city driving and zipping through suburbs in high style.

The S40 is the smallest of all the models, but getting behind the wheel and surveying the windshield, dashboard and console felt like settling in the cockpit of a small jet plane. Then, inserting the electronic black rubber key with the Integrated Remote Control and Central Locking System into the ignition slot and starting up the engine felt like preparing for take-off ... which essentially I was.

White-knuckle grip

Once I heard the sound of the 2.4-liter, five-cylinder Double Overhead Cam engine, I could almost hear it begging me to stomp on the gas. I promptly did, as soon as I familiarized myself with the free-floating center panel—something I had never seen in other luxury vehicles. All the controls—stereo, AC, and other electronic devices—were on a panel that was only a couple of centimeters thick, like a plasma screen, leaving plenty of room behind it to store other things.

The stereo console can be controlled from the steering wheel. I found that I could crank up ACDC's "Highway To Hell" without releasing my white-knuckle grip on the wheel as I howled down the C-5 or the South Luzon Expressway, since that was precisely what I did during the seven days I was entrusted with that titanium gray land bullet.

I drove that thing like a madman anywhere I could, as fast as I could, careening through city streets and rural highways without feeling the slightest intimidation. At times it seemed like a four-door chariot being wheeled around the city by 170 wild horses. But the soft purr of the engine made it feel and sound like I was on a magic carpet ride instead. This gave me the idea of testing the stereo system's volume capacity with some Steppenwolf.

Get your motor runnin'…

From the driver's seat the view is commanding. The seat itself is power adjustable and remembers what position you drive best at. It is wrapped in fine Eden Plush upholstery that's almost like leather. Needless to say, it's a supremely comfortable drive up front, but when I took my girlfriend's parents for a wet spin down south, her father was slightly cramped and claustrophobic in the backseat.

Meaning, despite its solid Boron frame, it's still a compact, albeit a much safer one, with a new patented frontal structure that employs several grades of steel. I guess it's like driving Fort Knox or one of those heavy metal cars, only it looks a lot sleeker and sportier. It's a lot swifter than most cars on the road.

> The S40 compact is a handsome little brute

Head out on the highway…

I tested this theory on several highways and flyovers from Manila to Batangas, using the "Geartronic" five-speed Automatic stick shift, and at 95 kph, which I tipped in about 10 shuddering seconds, the car felt like it was merely gliding along. I knew it could easily go twice as fast in a couple of more seconds, had I left my heavy right foot on the accelerator or downshifted the joy stick. But I felt my spleen aching, so I eased up and fiddled with the Swedish-engineered air-conditioner, which adjusted as easily as the volume knob of a radio.

Lookin' for adventure…

I revisited the wide avenues of my childhood in Ayala Alabang, the very streets where I learned to drive—Madrigal, Acacia, University, and the looping Country Club Drive.

I went further south past Susana Heights and explored the new Stone Crest Development near Southwoods, where I blessed those charming little cobblestone roads and rolling hill streets with the skid marks of the Volvo's 205/55R16 Pirelli tires.

I needed more music, but the high performance audio system didn't come stocked with a CD Changer. (But it does come with an in-dash deck and six loud speakers strategically located for maximum audio enjoyment while on the road. It's a driver-friendly sound system and control panel with big black knobs and a retro-digital FM tuner for hopeless romantics who like things the way they used to be.)

And whatever comes my way …

At night, as I cruised the noisy streets of Makati, I listened to some smooth Al Green, which went perfectly with the warm interiors and the neon glow of the little dashboard lights. Traffic was no longer frustrating in the Volvo, and I actually enjoyed some of those happy hours on primetime EDSA, just feeling like a person who deserves and can afford the very best out of life, especially in the realm of personal travel.

The Volvo S40 makes its driver feel like a winner, or at least like a high-powered professional of some kind. It draws attention—stares from pedestrians and drivers, compliments from friends and complete strangers—and projects an aura of romance, power and, most of all, security.

Yes, Safety has always been Volvo's top priority, and its famed Intelligent Vehicle Architecture continues to dictate Volvo's designs even as the company continues to expand in ideas. The designers have also managed to maintain the boxy security of the original concept while making the vehicles look more sleek, stylish and dynamic.

Forget the Ferrari

This handsome little brute, for instance, felt like I could drive it through walls without putting a scratch on it. There is an exhilarating sense of freedom that invariably comes with driving a Volvo, because of such a reputation for safety. I am gutsier behind its wheel than I am behind the wheel of a Ferrari, mainly because I never see Volvos leaving accident scenes, while Ferraris sometimes give me visions of blazing fireballs on the freeway.

My only real regret in driving this car, which costs more than my condo, was that I had to give it back. I thought about keeping the keys until they threatened to call the PNP, but reached the conclusion that a lame-brained stunt like that could eliminate my chances of ever driving a fine automobile like it again. Maybe next time it would be the S90 SUV, which is what I'd really like to put to the test.

Wonders …

From page A1

Speaker system with four units ranged vertically on either side of the screen and two subwoofer units under it make for an amazing viewing experience. I watched "A Perfect Storm" and believe me, those waves were roaring.

What really sets the Panasonic Viera from other Plasma and LCD TVs is its built-in Freeview tuner. Other Plasmas lose their sexiness with the big external TV tuner box that you need in order to use it, something that the Viera wisely does not need. The networking capability is also something for the new millennium. It has Dual slots for SD or other memory cards so you can enjoy pictures from a digital camera.

Wow plus

Other memory card-equipped devices can also be viewed on the Viera with its PCMCIA card slot. This is really the wave of the future. Imagine showing a group of friends, say a recent trip to Europe, on your Plasma TV. Wow.

The Viera can also be connected to the computer for surfing the net and viewing streaming videos. Another wow. Imagine gaming on a screen like this. The name Viera is from the idea of "a whole new visual era," and if these offerings from Panasonic are any indication, it really rings true.

Alas, the wave of the future does not come cheap. Even if the prices of Plasma and LCD sets are slowly coming down, they are still substantially more expensive than the average television. Hopefully, consumers will eventually earn enough money to bring them farther into the millennium.

Cherish Garcia-Hernandez

Light images

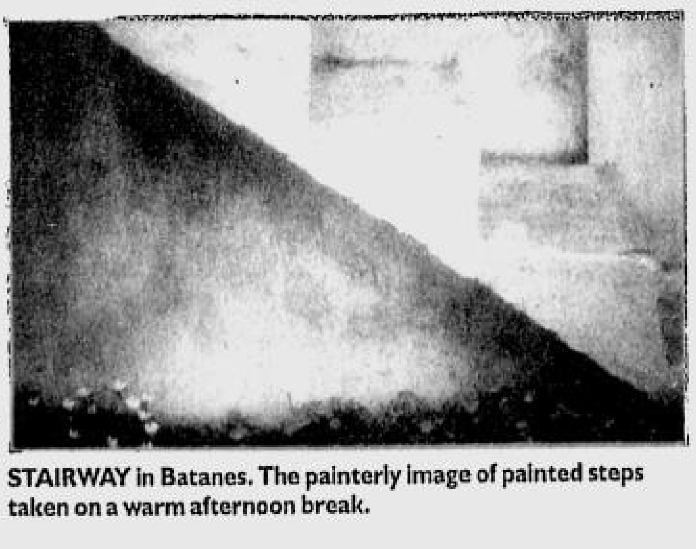
MASTER image maker Emil Davocol combines savvy in graphic design with photography.

His images evoke Zen-like simplicity, a powerful focal point and a painterly still-life quality. These images are enhanced by depth of feeling and are laden with meaning. A pastoral scene resembles a fragment of a bucolic dream. A stark golden leaf against a black tree trump throbs with ecological subtext. A detail of a pond surface symbolizes inner serenity.

Davocol uses sidelighting to paint subtle tones and define highlights and shadows. Warm tones emphasize the center of interest; shadows contrast and highlight important details. He uses silhouettes to differentiate from the lighter colors.

Often, he overlaps objects, such as a leaf in color over another. These techniques create virtual depth—that gives nature subjects a realistic three-dimensional quality.

See the works of the master at his exhibit, "Davocol's Light Images," at Artspace in Glorietta from Dec. 14 to 28.


STAIRWAY in Batanes. The painterly image of painted steps taken on a warm afternoon break.

Fashionista's best friend

THE NEW digital cameras are giving non-techies and amateurs a field day. Today's digicams are compact and equipped with professional features. Not only has photography become so easy but the post-production also enables the user to enhance the images.

The Digital Ixus i5 is the tiniest of Canon's digital cameras. It can fit into an evening clutch or a tight jean pocket. Activated by a Digic Imaging Processor and its sharp lenses, the camera is easy to focus. First-timers need not worry about blurred images since the Ixus i5 comes with a nine-point auto focus system that easily determines the position of the subject and centers it accordingly with the best exposure, regardless of time and location.

This camera has nine shooting modes that facilitate a wide range of shooting situations: night shot, indoor, portrait and outdoors. It also provides photo effects such as sepia and black and white aside from vivid color.

The Digital Ixus i5 connects with any PictBridge-compatible computer.

When linked to a Canon Card Photo printer, one can even get ID photo prints.

Hello, Gorgeous!

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

SONY Ericsson, the company that introduced phones like the T610, the P900 and my beloved k700i, has added another sublime handset to its already impressive collection—the s700i.

I get nervous every time the company turns out a new phone that I can road test. New models have a way of making me feel my current one is no longer good enough. After excitedly opening the familiar green box, I'm filled with apprehension as I transfer my sim card because I know this is the beginning of another vicious cycle of "phone withdrawal symptom." Let me explain.

I tell myself that I have to figure out the newcomer's features quickly and start working so that I can get back to my own phone quickly and painlessly and avoid wanting something I don't immediately need. Then I look for all the things I don't like about the new phone.

The s700i is the latest proof that Sony Ericsson is dedicated to producing quality handsets

It turns out that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the s700i, and I end up totally enamored. Being one of the very first mortals to handle it, I am complimented by people around me during the road test. Now, I hold my breath as I wait for the fateful day when it is taken away from me.

I feel disloyal to my k700i, which is loaded with amazing features. I told myself earlier it would be the last phone I would buy in a while. But the gorgeous s700i has everything the k700i has; and then some. For all of you who are wondering, the "i" stands for phones destined for the international market (anything out of North America).

Unique features

What sets the s700i apart is its unique swivel action. This adds a new dimension to the sexy modern look of the phone. The keypad is hidden to make the phone look like an actual digital camera when closed. (It has a striking resemblance to the Sony cyber shot cameras). But this swivel form factor makes it slightly bulkier than phones like the k700i. At 132 grams, it is definitely not heavy.

The 1.3 mega pixel camera is protected behind a sliding mechanism that is activated by sliding a switch. As soon as the lens opens, you can take pictures immediately. No more complicated menu chooser options. I find that this feature makes me use the camera more than I do with other camera phones. It is almost as if there is a phone hidden inside a camera and not the other way around.

Among the camera's many settings are: night mode, self-timer, assist light, white balance, spot metering, camera auto power-off timeout. The choice of photo sizes varies: 1280 x 960, 640 x 480, 320 x 240 or 160 x 120. There are effects, too, like sepia, black and white, negative and solarize. You can have so much fun using the frame templates for your photos.

For me, the best camera feature by far is the burst 4 setting. You can set your camera to take a series of consecutive shots, the outcome of which makes me feel like an amateur photographer-cum-Andy Warhol wannabe. It is great to always have a camera with you, and I'm not talking about the half decent cameras that are an afterthought to most phones nowadays.

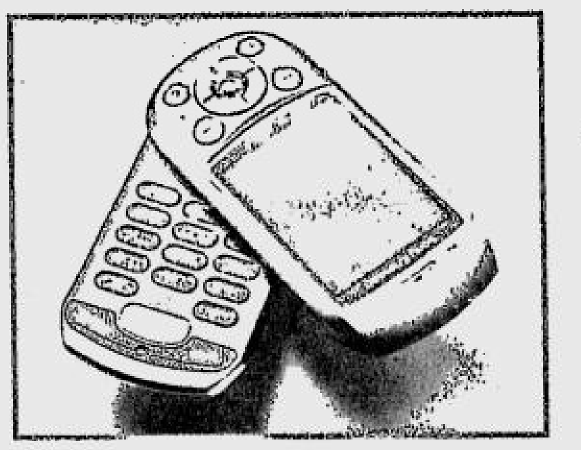
In short, the s700i has a good camera that produces good photos.

Ultra-sleek

Aside from the usual functions that are the standard of most phones today (Tri-band, GPRS, Bluetooth, Infrared, 40 voice polyphonic ring tone, downloadable themes and games, etc.), the s700i also has video capabilities, a good MP3 player and a stunning 2.3-inch, 262K color TFT display with 240 x 230 pixel resolution. Trust me, this is a big beautiful screen. It also comes with a 32MB memory stick card with its largest duo card capacity coming in at 128 MB, just like the P900.

The interface of the s700i is like that of the k700i, but it has no clock or screen saver available. The possible reason for this is that the power consumption cost may be too great with such a large screen. As far as battery life is concerned, it is excellent with 167 hours of standby time (that's almost a week) and 5.5 hours of talk time, a big improvement from the k700i's battery life. Note that this battery life is without any camera use. The camera is a real battery drainer.

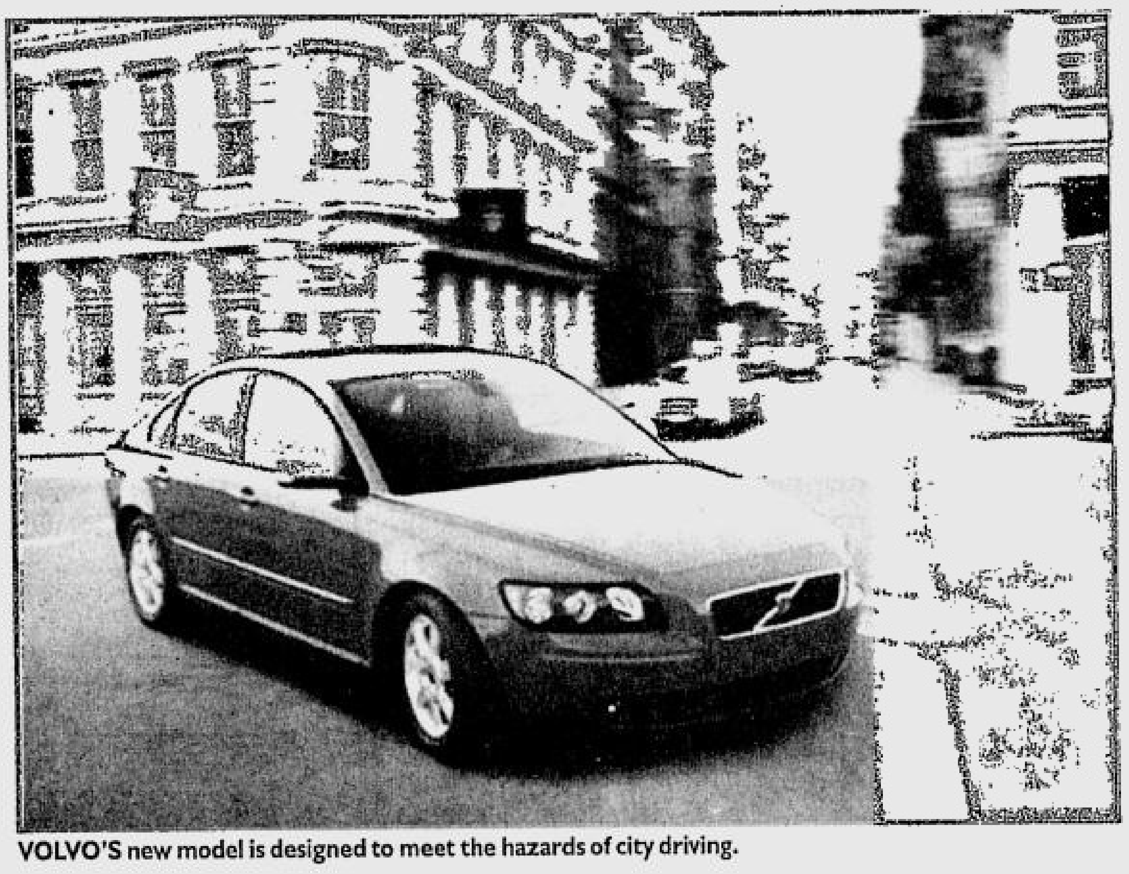
There is a great lock slider on the side that lets you lock and unlock all the buttons of the phone in a single, quick action. Sony Ericsson continues to make its phones more user friendly by doing away with all the complicated steps on a main menu. The rubber flap at the bottom that you have to remove when charging is an improvement over the k700i's flap, but it is something I would rather not have. Of course, I'm just nitpicking. The recessed keypad takes some getting used to when sending text messages, especially after the elevated keypad of other phones.


SONY Ericsson's s700i has been touted as the best camera phone among the present batch for its clarity.

I'm usually wary of gadgets with lots of moving parts, and I have to say that the swivel function scared me a bit. But after a week of use, the spinner hinge seems stable and strong, although I wonder why it can only open one way. You open by turning clockwise and close by turning counter-clockwise.

As always, Sony Ericsson has shown that it is dedicated to producing quality handsets for a discerning market.

Email the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com.


VOLVO'S new model is designed to meet the hazards of city driving.

Luvvv this Volvo!

By Josemari Ugarte
Contributor

WHEN I was asked to test-drive the dashing new Volvo S40 compact and dispense a few spirited remarks on the experience, I snapped up the chance. "Hand me the keys!" I demanded.

At first I thought I would get to drive the SUV, so I planned several high-speed off-road trips to Batangas and other locales like Subic Bay, to join a celebrity-spiked hobie Regatta. Or I said I could go up to Baguio and Sagada to pick up some delicacies.

But when I went to the Volvo showroom on Pasong Tamo Extension in Makati to pick up the car, I was told that I was getting the artful new compact model—which was an entirely different thrill altogether, city driving and zipping through suburbs in high style.

The S40 is the smallest of all the models, but getting behind the wheel and surveying the windshield, dashboard and console felt like settling in the cockpit of a small jet plane. Then, inserting the electronic black rubber key with the Integrated Remote Control and Central Locking System into the ignition slot and starting up the engine felt like preparing for take-off ... which essentially I was.

White-knuckle grip

Once I heard the sound of the 2.4-liter, five-cylinder Double Overhead Cam engine, I could almost hear it begging me to stomp on the gas. I promptly did, as soon as I familiarized myself with the free-floating center panel—something I had never seen in other luxury vehicles. All the controls—stereo, AC, and other electronic devices—were on a panel that was only a couple of centimeters thick, like a plasma screen, leaving plenty of room behind it to store other things.

The stereo console can be controlled from the steering wheel. I found that I could crank up ACDC's "Highway To Hell" without releasing my white-knuckle grip on the wheel as I howled down the C-5 or the South Luzon Expressway, since that was precisely what I did during the seven days I was entrusted with that titanium gray land bullet.

I drove that thing like a madman anywhere I could, as fast as I could, careening through city streets and rural highways without feeling the slightest intimidation. At times it seemed like a four-door chariot being wheeled around the city by 170 wild horses. But the soft purr of the engine made it feel and sound like I was on a magic carpet ride instead. This gave me the idea of testing the stereo system's volume capacity with some Steppenwolf.

Get your motor runnin'...

From the driver's seat the view is commanding. The seat itself is power adjustable and remembers what position you drive best at. It is wrapped in fine Eden Plush upholstery that's almost like leather. Needless to say, it's a supremely comfortable drive up front, but when I took my girlfriend's parents for a wet spin down south, her father was slightly cramped and claustrophobic in the backseat.

Meaning, despite its solid Boron frame, it's still a compact, albeit a much safer one, with a new patented frontal structure that employs several grades of steel. I guess it's like driving Fort Knox or one of those heavy metal cars, only it looks a lot sleeker and sportier. It's a lot swifter than most cars on the road.

The S40 compact is a handsome little brute

Head out on the highway...

I tested this theory on several highways and flyovers from Manila to Batangas, using the "Geartronic" five-speed Automatic stick shift, and at 95 kph, which I tipped in about 10 shuddering seconds, the car felt like it was merely gliding along. I knew it could easily go twice as fast in a couple of more seconds, had I left my heavy right foot on the accelerator or downshifted the joy stick. But I felt my spleen aching, so I eased up and fiddled with the Swedish-engineered air-conditioner, which adjusted as easily as the volume knob of a radio.

Lookin' for adventure...

I revisited the wide avenues of my childhood in Ayala Alabang, the very streets where I learned to drive—Madrigal, Acacia, University, and the looping Country Club Drive.

I went further south past Susana Heights and explored the new Stone Crest Development near Southwoods, where I blessed those charming little cobblestone roads and rolling hill streets with the skid marks of the Volvo's 205/55R16 Pirelli tires.

I needed more music, but the high performance audio system didn't come stocked with a CD Changer. (But it does come with an in-dash deck and six loud speakers strategically located for maximum audio enjoyment while on the road. It's a driver-friendly sound system and control panel with big black knobs and a retro-digital FM tuner for hopeless romantics who like things the way they used to be.)

And whatever comes my way ...

At night, as I cruised the noisy streets of Makati, I listened to some smooth Al Green, which went perfectly with the warm interiors and the neon glow of the little dashboard lights. Traffic was no longer frustrating in the Volvo, and I actually enjoyed some of those happy hours on primetime EDSA, just feeling like a person who deserves and can afford the very best out of life, especially in the realm of personal travel.

The Volvo S40 makes its driver feel like a winner, or at least like a high-powered professional of some kind. It draws attention—stares from pedestrians and drivers, compliments from friends and complete strangers—and projects an aura of romance, power and, most of all, security.

Yes, Safety has always been Volvo's top priority, and its famed Intelligent Vehicle Architecture continues to dictate Volvo's designs even as the company continues to expand in ideas. The designers have also managed to maintain the boxy security of the original concept while making the vehicles look more sleek, stylish and dynamic.

Forget the Ferrari

This handsome little brute, for instance, felt like I could drive it through walls without putting a scratch on it. There is an exhilarating sense of freedom that invariably comes with driving a Volvo, because of such a reputation for safety. I am gutsier behind its wheel than I am behind the wheel of a Ferrari, mainly because I never see Volvos leaving accident scenes, while Ferraris sometimes give me visions of blazing fireballs on the freeway.

My only real regret in driving this car, which costs more than my condo, was that I had to give it back. I thought about keeping the keys until they threatened to call the PNP, but reached the conclusion that a lame-brained stunt like that could eliminate my chances of ever driving a fine automobile like it again. Maybe next time it would be the S90 SUV, which is what I'd really like to put to the test.

Wonders ...

From page A1

Speaker system with four units ranged vertically on either side of the screen and two subwoofer units under it make for an amazing viewing experience. I watched "A Perfect Storm" and believe me, those waves were roaring.

What really sets the Panasonic Viera from other Plasma and LCD TVs is its built-in Freeview tuner. Other Plasmas lose their sexiness with the big external TV tuner box that you need in order to use it, something that the Viera wisely does not need. The networking capability is also something for the new millennium. It has Dual slots for SD or other memory cards so you can enjoy pictures from a digital camera.

Wow plus

Other memory card-equipped devices can also be viewed on the Viera with its PCMCIA card slot. This is really the wave of the future. Imagine showing a group of friends, say a recent trip to Europe, on your Plasma TV. Wow.

The Viera can also be connected to the computer for surfing the net and viewing streaming videos. Another wow. Imagine gaming on a screen like this. The name Viera is from the idea of "a whole new visual era," and if these offerings from Panasonic are any indication, it really rings true.

Alas, the wave of the future does not come cheap. Even if the prices of Plasma and LCD sets are slowly coming down, they are still substantially more expensive than the average television. Hopefully, consumers will eventually earn enough money to bring them farther into the millennium.

Cherish Garcia-Hernandez

Light images

MASTER image maker Emil Davocol combines savvy in graphic design with photography.

His images evoke Zen-like simplicity, a powerful focal point and a painterly still-life quality. These images are enhanced by depth of feeling and are laden with meaning. A pastoral scene resembles a fragment of a bucolic dream. A stark golden leaf against a black tree trump throbs with ecological subtext. A detail of a pond surface symbolizes inner serenity.

Davocol uses sidelighting to paint subtle tones and define highlights and shadows. Warm tones emphasize the center of interest; shadows contrast and highlight important details. He uses silhouettes to differentiate from the lighter colors.

Often, he overlaps objects, such as a leaf in color over another. These techniques create virtual depth—that gives nature subjects a realistic three-dimensional quality.

See the works of the master at his exhibit, "Davocol's Light Images," at Artspace in Glorietta from Dec. 14 to 28.

STAIRWAY in Batanes. The painterly image of painted steps taken on a warm afternoon break.

Fashionista's best friend

THE NEW digital cameras are giving non-techies and amateurs a field day. Today's digicams are compact and equipped with professional features. Not only has photography become so easy but the post-production also enables the user to enhance the images.

The Digital Ixus i5 is the tiniest of Canon's digital cameras. It can fit into an evening clutch or a tight jean pocket. Activated by a Digic Imaging Processor and its sharp lenses, the camera is easy to focus. First-timers need not worry about blurred images since the Ixus i5 comes with a nine-point auto focus system that easily determines the position of the subject and centers it accordingly with the best exposure, regardless of time and location.

This camera has nine shooting modes that facilitate a wide range of shooting situations: night shot, indoor, portrait and outdoors. It also provides photo effects such as sepia and black and white aside from vivid color.

The Digital Ixus i5 connects with any PictBridge-compatible computer.

When linked to a Canon Card Photo printer, one can even get ID photo prints.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

It's about time

In the old days watches informed about social status. Today, they pledge allegiance to a certain lifestyle

BEN CHAN, CEO and creative director of Suyen Corporation, draws a pun out of the auspicious launch of his watch line: "It's about time."

Bench/Time is a natural advancement of his fashion line. After creating separates, accessories, underwear and personal care items, the most logical thing was to develop timepieces.

L Time Studio, a licensee of Bench/Time, handles manufacturing and distribution while Bench provides the direction. L Time Studio is managed by Ivan and Emerson Yao, whose family has been in the watch distribution business for three generations.

"We want to know what Bench is doing so that the watches will match their collection," says Emerson. On the other hand, L Time Studio also proposes styles that are going to be hot in the watch industry even if they may not follow Bench's forecast.

Bench/Time thus comes off the tables of the best watchmakers in Hong Kong and other parts of Asia.

One major basis of their partnership, Chan explains, is L Time Studio's experience, particularly in the luxury watch category. The company also has a wide network capable of selling Bench/Time watches outside of Bench stores.

Bench still maintains the positioning of high-image products with moderate pricing that is affordable to the target market of 18 to 30 years old. Although the price range of the timepieces is from P2,000 to P3,500, quality is guaranteed at par with imported watches in the P5,000 to P8,000 category.

Asked how the consumer is getting value for money with Bench/Time, Emerson explains: "First, there's the metal. Most watches at these price points are not made from solid steel but are merely plated. If steel is used, it is either hollow or light because of the thin sheets of folded steel. Bench/Time watches feel solid because they are carved out of a whole piece of steel. Second, there are interesting details, like the curved glass. We also pay utmost attention to the components on the face of the watch."

The distribution system also makes it pocket-friendly. Other watches are sold through a hierarchy of distributors starting from the international principals, the local agents and the retailers. Each layer would add profit on top of profit. Thus, the cost of the watch doubles or triples.

"We give value for money from the brand ownership viewpoint. The production, distribution and retail are done by L Time Studio. We can condense our margin to accommodate the value-for-money proposition of Bench. That's why we can come up with products with good value," says Emerson.

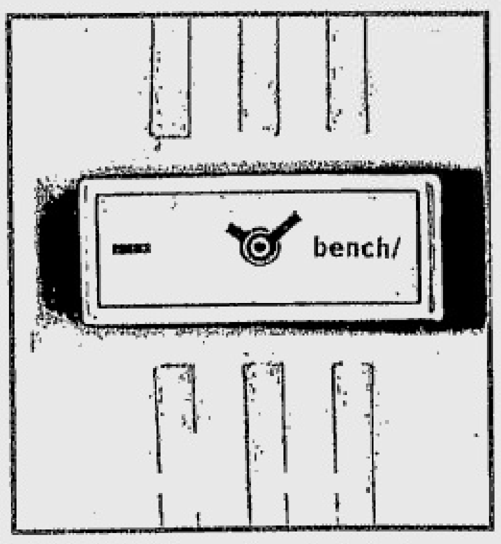
Bench's foray into timepieces is a result of productivity. Many products have been perfected and cannot be developed any further. Therefore, watches are no longer mediums of utility. They offer symbolic capital.

"The watch industry used to be driven by people with money—those who can afford a Rolex. The lower-priced watches catered to the masses. Now, buying watches is lifestyle driven. Fashion watches have become accessories that are accepted by all income groups. If you wear a Rolex on weekdays, you wear Bench on weekends. There has been an influx of fashion watches. They define a particular lifestyle. People look at the style first. Time keeping has become secondary because a cell phone can provide that service," says Emerson.

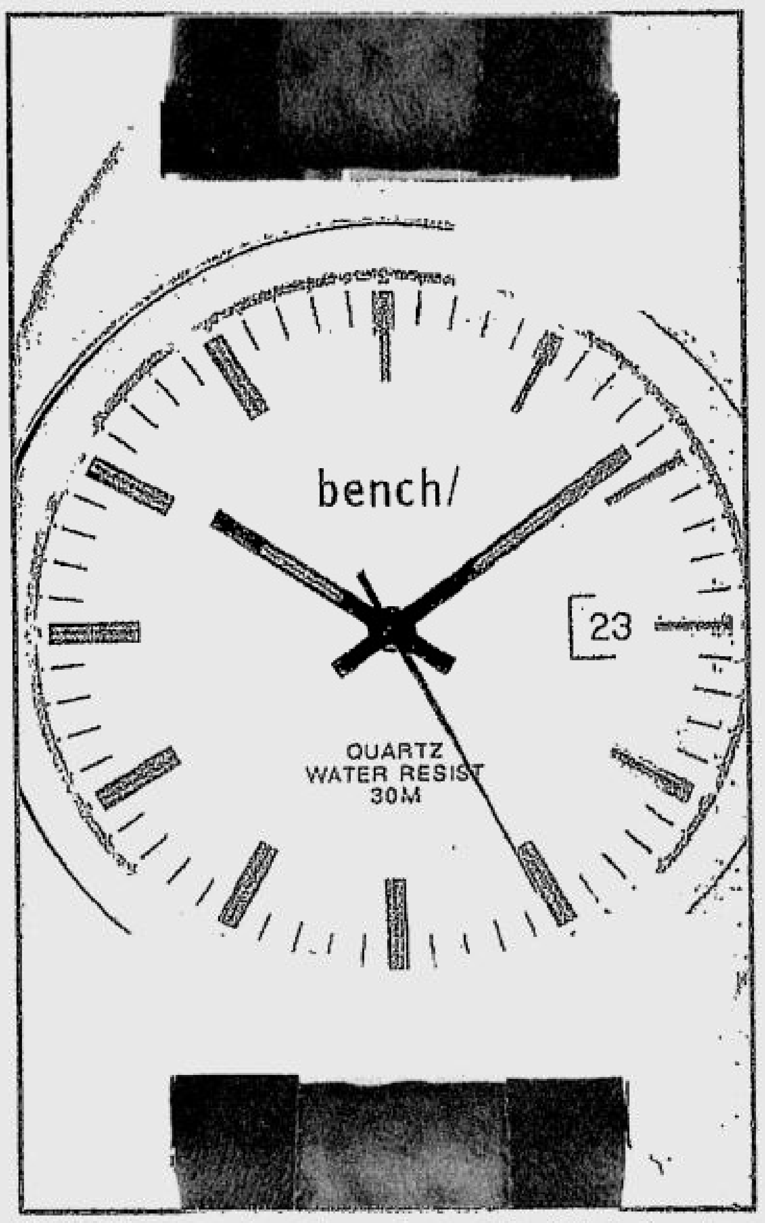
Back then, people, who bought watches for their function, preferred traditional brands such as Seiko, Citizen, Omega or Rolex, depending on their budget. Today, younger consumers eschew the brands of their parents in favor of new brands of fashion watches.

"They want to define their attitudes and character through the watch styles," says Emerson.

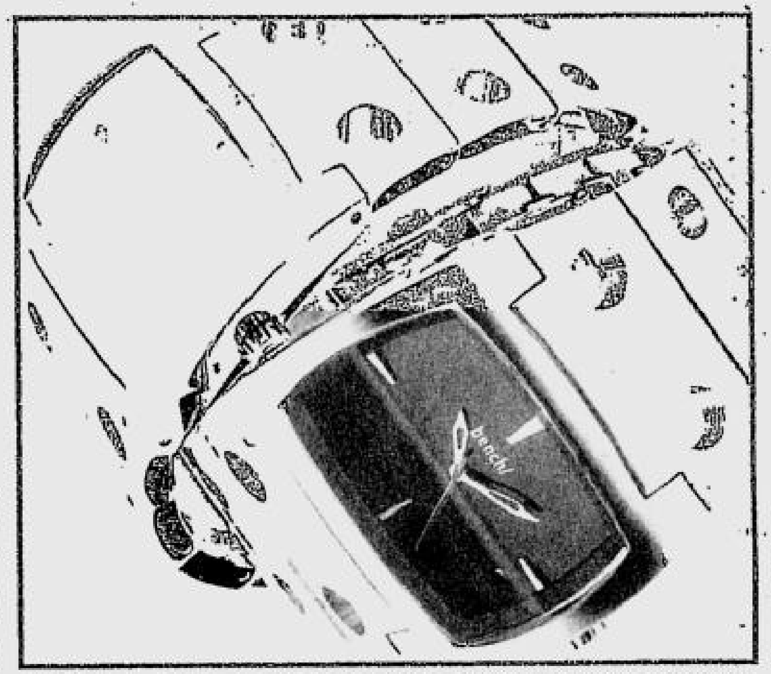
Marge C. Enriquez



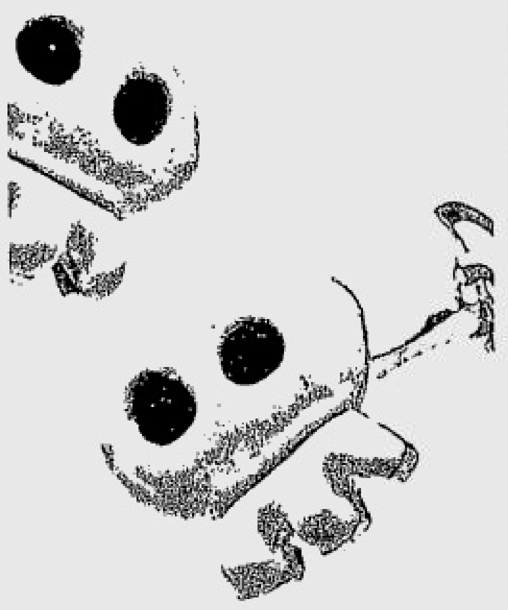
THE BANGLE is a modern classic design with minimalist face.



RETRO. The contrasting stripes on the treated calfskin leather strap evoke the stripes in sportswear. The index, hands and dial reflect the stripes on the straps.



LARGE watch is vogue. The holes on the stainless steel bracelet make it fashion forward. Another detail is the curved glass.



MEN'S collection. Skull cuff-links made from enamel

BLINGBLING! Oversize ring made of blue topaz cut in Germany; the winding bracelt from the Spaghetti collection made with a small spring for movement and freely cut diamonds and the oval earrings that open into hinges PHOTOS BY LARRY TAMONDONG, PACIFIC LIGHT STUDIO

Playful jewelry

WHEN STAURINO Fratelli (Italian for "brothers") was launched at the Peninsula Manila, the social set and diplomatic corps rushed to the new Vanafi jewelry store at the mezzanine.

Vanafi became part of every fashionista's must list when it introduced new jewelry from Italy in its stores at Ninoy Aquino International Airport and Glorietta.

After the cocktails, clients made private appointments to inspect the Staurino Fratelli collection before issuing six- or seven-figure checks.

The jewelry brand, established 40 years ago by Luigi and Paolo Staurino, established its reputation by producing one-of-a-kind items. Clients also had their bling-blings custom-made. As in the haute couture tradition, this entailed hours of research and development and hundreds of staff hours.

Today, Luigi's sons Davide, president, and Stefano, administrator, continue the family tradition. Davide, 32, learned the craft by osmosis, watching his father design and run the business. He then went to art school to hone his design skills. "My father taught me never to be satisfied, to always seek perfection in design and finishing," he tells ÉLAN. "He was never concerned about quantity of customers. He always believed in serving only the right customers."

Among their loyal clients are the Middle Eastern royal families.

Playful

When Davide took over the business, he infused the designs with playfulness and edginess. Staurino's design peg is the spaghetti which, Davide points out, is an Italian icon.

The Spaghetti collection is characterized by a linear perspective. The cross pendant and earrings feature intersecting lines of white gold radiating from one point. They are encrusted with white and brown diamonds and pink and yellow sapphires and garnets. Davide adds that even the spacing of the elements is part of the design, to evoke lightness and modernity.

Rings and earrings assume a multidimensional quality as white bold bands are hinged onto an axis, giving them more flexibility so they can be worn in many ways. The Magic Snake is a ring of white gold with black rhodium whose multi-bands can be elongated on the finger.

The Mikado collection harks back to childhood memories of Pick-Up-Sticks or jackstraws. The necklaces and earrings look like a playful assemblage of lines that were strewn off and picked up randomly to create geometric shapes.

"They resemble sculptures," Davide says.

Staurino gives the Nature collection a twist. Instead of merely designing butterflies and dragonflies, a lot of thought went into creating springs and hinges to give life to the jewelry. Davide points out the mechanism hidden under the dragonfly wings to make them tremble.

The jewelry firm takes into consideration the customer who wants drop-dead glamour with its Oversize collection. The proportions and shapes are inspired by Renaissance jewelry. The pieces are composed of large semi-precious stones adorned with diamonds put together through laser technology.

800 diamonds

Davide explains that lasers can solder tiny pieces of jewelry onto the big stones without breaking the latter. The Snowflake collection is a modern mix of pink unbreakable enamel rays atop clusters of pavé cut diamonds set on prongs.

Staurino recently ventured into the unisex watch and men's collections. The watch collection is made in Switzerland "with Italian design," Davide maintains. The shape is unusual and striking in its proportion—a long ellipsis with a curved crystal sapphire encased in white gold and studded with black diamonds and a ruby crown. The straps are from python printed veal leather.

Next year, Staurino is set to revive the electronic LCD which was popular in the '70s.

The men's designs humorously feature crossbones and skulls on the cuff links and pins. Davide says, "It's a little game. Not all men may be ready for this design. They (usually prefer) something traditional."

Staurino favors white gold for settings. Davide says white gold is a more elegant background for stones. "If you use yellow gold, the effect is different," he says, adding that he means nothing short of tacky.

The most impressive elements of the collection are tiny links behind the jewelry that move, and the exquisite cutting and soldering of the stones. They are really tiny—from a quarter of a millimeter to a millimeter—and one cannot see the spaces between them with the naked eye. The trembling dragonfly brooch, for instance, is set with 800 pavé cut diamonds.

Davide says: "People don't realize that a lot of work goes into every detail. We consider the links, the proportion between the links, the lines that must be equidistant, the proportion between the outside and inside elements. Some pieces take 400 hours (to make). When we made the dragonfly brooch, we also considered the weight of the spring. We made sure that the jewelry is soft and comfortable for the wearer. We are dealing with a special customer. They must have the best so we make sure we give them something special."

Marge C. Enriquez

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THE PROBLEM
Today, we are surrounded by vast amounts of low energy electromagnetic fields (EMF) emitted by cellular phone systems, computers, overhead lights, and electronic devices of all kinds. The fact is the human body was not built to withstand the effects of these potentially harmful fields.

HOW IS EMF HARMFUL?
The cells in our bodies communicate using billions of tiny electrical impulses The electromagnetic energy coming from these manmade devices stands in the way of our cells' ability to communicate effectively and ultimately inhibits our performance.

HOW DOES THE TESLAR® CHIP WORK?
The TESLAR® Chip is engineered to interact with the components of the Philip Stein TESLAR® watch and is designed to help the body strengthen its energy field and reduce the negative effects of exposure to electronic pollution by creating a special signal that mimics the earth's natural healing frequency.

The Teslar® chips are clearly visible through small windows on the back of the watch.

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- An overall improvement in well-being
- Improved concentration & ability to focus
- Increased levels of energy
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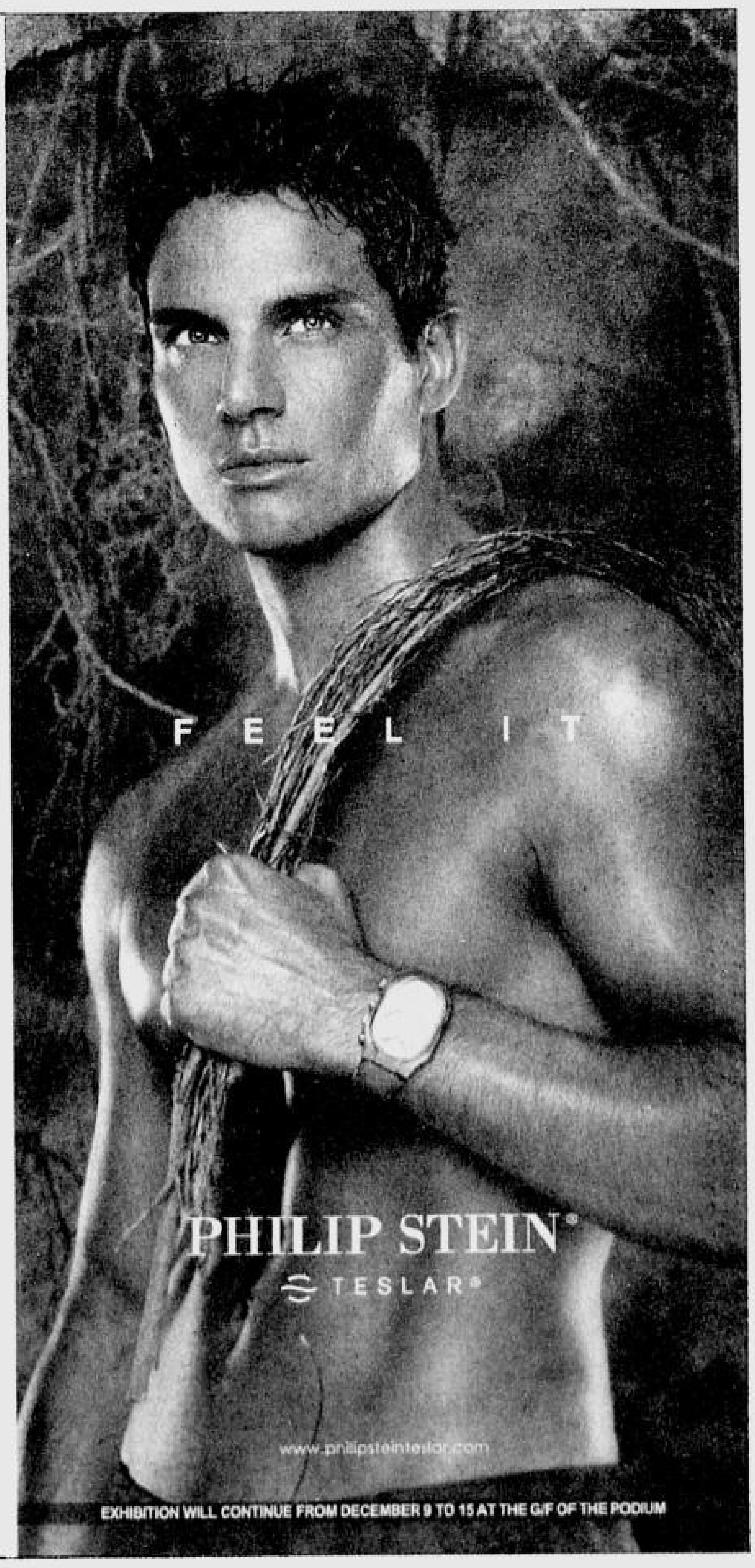
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EXHIBITION WILL CONTINUE FROM DECEMBER 9 TO 15 AT THE G/F OF THE PODIUM

"Bibot" diaries

How luck we were to have known, for one brief shining moment, this fireball on earth who lived a spectacular life

By Ana Abad Santos-Bitong
Contributor

HEAVEN? You just have to reach out and make it yours.

"But you have to go through hell with me first" was the catch. It was 1991, and in the first rehearsal for my first straight play with Zenaida Amador or "Tita Bibot," she hounded me through every line, word, and punctuation mark that was in the script.

She pushed me to see beyond the words and uncover the story within the pages; not to just read the text but to breathe life into it. She was relentless in those four hours, never backing off, scaring me shitless. But, miracle of all miracles, her furor ignited a light in me and I suddenly knew what she meant, what she wanted, and what she could see. I hardened my gut and went on.

The next time around, after my scene, she looked at me and said "good." She gave me a little smile, too, and a nod. That's when she said, "Ana, heaven is just there, you just have to reach out and make it yours."

Eternal delight

There was this snapshot of Tita Bibs with the great Lawrence Olivier.

He had just given a lecture and written something on the board: "Energy is eternal delight." I would see this photograph many times through the years, play after play, during moments of disgust when we just weren't at par with her expectations—which were high, believe me.

"Energy!" she would scream. "How dare you step onstage without energy!" What she really meant, though, is how could anyone live without energy? For that was how she lived, with 100 percent energy and impassioned in every aspect of her life—directing, acting, reading. And yes, even eating.

Lowest life form

Tita Bibot loathed latecomers. She said they were the lowest life forms, in the same category as murderers, rapists and corrupt politicians. Thus she made sure latecomers knew she took this personally. Every single one of them experienced her wrath. One was excused only if he or she were dying ... or dead.

Another type she despised were "stars." You are only as good as your last role, she said. This is painfully true; the theater can be cruel in this way. But in exchange for hard work and commitment, she offered us consolation, a safe world where there are rules and no one breaks them, a realm where there is order. She offered us the stage where we can shine, a place where we can be untouched by mundane life. That was the barter, and we accepted it.

What about death?

One night during a "Les Miserables" cast party, Tita Bibs asked us to write what we would do if we had only a year to live. As in any other time when she asked me to do something, I complied seriously and diligently. I wrote my answer down and tried to give it to her, but she would not take it. Instead, she said, "Whatever you wrote, Ana, live your life pursuing it."

By the time I joined Rep, Tita Bibot was rarely stepping on stage. Fortunately, in the few times that she did henceforth, I acted with her, playing her daughter Gwendolyn in the 1996 play, "The Importance of Being Earnest." Again in 2000, I was her daughter Cordelia in "King Lear."

I loved acting with her. She fed me a lot of her favorite food, so that usually by the last few shows I would need to adjust my costume.

As an actor, she joked around with the others, never commented about any one's performance or contradicted the director. The only thing frightening about Tita Bibot as an actor was that she had her lines memorized on the first day of rehearsals. Yes, even when we were doing King Lear... and she was King Lear.

From time to time, she would be faced with the task she abhorred most, directing an actor with no talent, skill or brain. Undaunted, she would grit her teeth and growl: "You can't squeeze blood out of a turnip but I can damn well paint it red!" You can be sure nothing will ruin the show; not even a bad actor.

Mediocrity is death

That's about the worst insult she can hurl at you. A mediocre actor is worse than a bad actor. When new actors complained about her terrorizing the living daylights out of them, I would reply in the same way that old timers told me: "Be thankful she's screaming at you. It's when she ignores you that you should be afraid. That means you are M.E.D.I.O.C.R.E. and a complete waste of her time."

Underneath Tita Bibot's iron hand was a soft heart. She treasured loyalty, and was fiercely devoted in turn to those who were loyal to her. At my wedding, she surprised me with a poem in the middle of the reception.

I had witnessed her immense capacity for love, especially when she and Tita Baby Barredo invited us to dinner at their home and fussed over us, regaling us with stories of their travels around the world. When I watched her do "Late Night Catechism" last year, I went backstage afterwards to congratulate her on her superb performance. She waved my compliments aside and said, "You should see Tita Baby, she's even better."

Golden rules

Every single thing we learned from her was precious.

- **No acting, please.** Actors who act should be crucified. There was only one way to perform the art of acting, and that is to not act. There should only be truth.
- **Comedy is a hard business.** Tita Bibot always warned us against "putzing" around when we're doing a farce. And she liked to put up comedies, believing the Filipino people needed a good laugh more than a good cry.
- **Pick up the pace.** This is imbedded in my brain. Loitering on stage is a mortal sin. This she called masturbation which, she never tired of reminding us, belonged to the bathroom.
- **Timing is everything.** A lot of principles executed onstage, Tita Bibot applied in real life as well. This was one of them. You can bring a house down with laughter with a single look or gasp. Likewise, you can fall flat on your face in a flash if you "punch" a line a beat too late or too early.

Even in her own death, she applied this principle. She left on a rare Sunday when there was no Rep show—very rare—making a swift and flawless exit in true Bibot style. Not a wasted moment.

Saturday, November 27, Tita Baby opened their house to all those whose lives Bibot had touched. People came from all over to pay their respects, taking turns keeping her company, and crying on Tita Baby's shoulder.

We went inside her room and sang "Somewhere Over The Rainbow." She clapped and said, "Break a leg." We had a show later that day. I kissed her hand. That was my last moment with her alive. She died the next day.

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Beside Araneta Coliseum
Welcome to shopping like no other this Christmas
The Oasis
Spectacular floating garden with towering Royal Palms
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Takes the load off so you can load up on more shopping
5,000 parking spaces around Araneta Center
Gateway alone has 700 indoor parking slots
Rustan's
Department Store
Your kind of store, like no other in Quezon City
Fresh Supermarket
Holiday goodies fresh from the tree, from all over the world
10 of the country's best and biggest cinema screens
with the plushiest seats ever
FOOD EXPRESS
15 best-in-class, quick-service restaurants
World Class Brands
With over 200 of your favorite brands
Gourmet Tower
20 casual dining restaurants
all with a view of the Oasis
MRT 2 and LRT3 direct access
For car-less shopping to beat Christmas traffic
TACO BELL
Taco Bell
Ringing in record crowds
Cool Jazz, Cool Classics
Live acoustic music Saturdays & Sundays
6pm Gateway Mall • 8:30pm & 10pm Coliseum Circle